THE WIND AND THE RAIN

Founded by Michael Allmand

EDITED BY NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE

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SUMMER, 1948

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THE WIND AND THE RAIN

Edited by NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE

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LATE INDIAN SUMMER

Swelling Prologues to a New Phase

OVER there by the prompt-corner in rubber plimsolls stands a young boy waiting for a sign : the sign from the stage manager to let the curtain rise on this the last scene of the present vaudeville. The scene which has been chosen is an old one—an international number with a patriotic emphasis. In the wings the different artistes are loitering with their different flags, ready to wave a final adieu to *their* public ; there are some carrying the tricolore of France, others the ensign with the crescent moon, and yet others with a banner of stars and stripes—even the flag of Uruguay with its smiling sun in one corner has not been forgotten in this motley throng. But there is one notable omission : it is the Russian red flag. Still for the time being that does not matter because as each new trio has appeared with a fresh flag, so the applause has swollen, only to reach its culmination at this moment as John Bull in his nankeen breeches struts towards the footlights with the Union Jack pulled tight across an obviously padded chest. The show is at an end and a spirit of goodwill reigns in the auditorium : national feuds are temporarily put aside like old debts, whilst the more unpleasant realities of the hour are forgotten. Now natural enough as is such an abandonment of world problems to-day because of their complexity, as a remedy wishful thinking is no palliative for hard facts. Time and again, in other spheres, one finds this same fallacy arising : in political speeches about the relationship of Europe to America little is said of the colour bar, mainly through a material fear of antagonising an old ally and, to a lesser degree, for reasons of so-called decorum. Again more often than not magazines and quarterlies in an attempt to devote their pages to the study of one particular country (in this case India) allow editorial politeness to be a cover for frank speaking. Mutual admiration takes the place of constructive criticism.

However, when all is said and done, just as a flag may infuse an audience with fine sentiments, a flag alone will not allow that audience to realize those sentiments unless they are founded upon both a courage and an initiative which is already latent. Approval and generous feeling are never enough to achieve an ideal : there must be coexistent with them both determinism and faith. If, therefore, the writers in this number are censorious, perhaps hypercritical, of the men and movements whose action and thoughts fall under their scrutiny, it is by editorial design. In a continent as vast as India it is

important to remember that ultimately neither imperialist campaigning nor political anecdotage—the misdemeanours of *this* planter's family or the double-dealing of *that* particular rajah—have any relevance other than one that is purely ephemeral. What is necessary in their place is responsible judgment; and without that responsible judgment one cannot achieve a responsible electorate. The two are complementary and it is the fissure that has existed down the centuries between these two states that has been largely resultant in the continual tragic division of the country not only during British rule, but long before the English ever came to India, between Brahmin and Sikh, Moslem and Hindu, and so right back to the days of Megasthenes.

If the Himalayas are nature's overtowering monument in India, then it is the Hindu Temple that is man's overtowering achievement. It is the supreme work of Indian art. Yet, however, great its artistic success it should never be forgotten that its erection was at the expense of the untouchables. Like the pyramids it is the direct outcome of a slavery which, if not as diabolical as that of Pharaoh's, is at least the outcome of a social ostracism pharisaic enough to take the name of religion in its defence. Those who make fortuitous comparisons between the Hindu Temple and the Mediaeval Cathedral lay themselves open to a complete misreading of history. The similarities, when they are weighed carefully, reveal themselves as only one, namely, their both being the issue of an anonymous tradition. Yet it is more than social interest that may let one pause here to note a judgment, now a hundred years old, made by the Abbé Dubois in his book, *Hindu Manners and Customs*. There he wrote:

> 'I am persuaded that it is simply and solely due to the distribution of the people into castes that India did not lapse into a state of barbarism, and that she preserved and perfected the arts and sciences of civilization whilst most other nations of the earth remained in a state of barbarism. I do not consider caste to be free from many great draw-backs; but I believe that the resulting advantages in the case of a nation constituted like the Hindus more than outweigh the resulting evils.'

Admittedly it is true that it is mainly through Hinduism that Indian civilization has been preserved for the past five thousand years. Yet, in spite of its preservation, it is necessary to add that it is hard to set side by side both this achievement and the high moral tone upheld in the Upanishads, the burning of widows, the doctrine of untouchability or the fearful Bihar riots of October, 1946, brought about by Hindu fanaticism. Here is the report as read in Parliament in London shortly after the event:

> 'Sword, lathi, crude spear—all were used to the full. Sadism went to the length of living men being sown up in sacks and thrown into the Ganges. Neither woman nor child was spared. Children under five, sometimes as young as one month old, were roasted alive in bonfires. Savage sacrificial rites were performed. Wombs of pregnant women were ripped open and the unborn life plucked out and torn to pieces. Infants were snatched from mothers and hacked in two, and mothers forced to

behold the massacre of her child ere she fell herself. Political argument took the savage form of a babe cut in two and presented to its parents as an example of Pakistan. Women were pursued with flaming torches, attached to long spears, and burnt to death. Young girls were outraged and raped, a large number of whom threw themselves into wells to save their honour. Those to whom death gave no refuge were carried away, prostituted and deflowered, to serve as slave girls in the meanest Hindu houses, and to live as trophies annexed in " war " '.

This commentary placed beside that of the Abbé Dubois (already cited) is startling. One is faced with two conflicting attitudes and it is not easy to reconcile them. The defence of Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in his recently published book, *Religion and Society* (1947), is at first sight satisfying: it is that such riots as those in Bihar are the excresences of a form of Hinduism which has become polluted, in much the same way as one might argue similarly over some of the Borgia Popes with regard to Christianity. But one advisedly says 'at first sight' because if Christianity has its scandals at least they are the scandals of men: they are not actions flowing out of its ethic whereas the Hindu ethic, with its repeated accent on the glories of sex and fertility, very naturally with time tends to include such things as the prostitution of young temple girls, together with the obscene rites of the Tantras, as an integral part of its ritual. Such acts become invested with a religious meaning. Yet over-towering all these orgiastic ceremonies, as the Himalayas the north and the Hindu Temple the rest, is the basic problem of caste, for it is at once both the foundation and condemnation of Indian society.

Quite sometime ago Tagore wrote: 'My unfortunate country! it is right that we as a nation should taste the humiliation which we have inflicted upon our oppressed brethren. Our only salvation lies in drawing into our midst them whom we so far pushed away into the outer wilderness'. In less poetic, but equally emphatic terms, Gandhi stated the case thus: 'The Hindus have considered themselves Aryas or civilized and a section of their own kith and kin as Anaryas or untouchables, with the result that a strange if unjust nemesis is being visited not only upon the Hindus in South Africa, but also upon the Mussalmans and Parsis as well, inasmuch as they belong to the same country and have the same colour as their Hindu brethren'. For this eighth of India's population Gandhi more vehemently than any of his predecessors fought so that their dignity as men might once more be asserted; so that they might be recognized again as human beings. How far he succeeded it is too early to assess, because it must be admitted that India is a country in which the land-marks of history quickly fade. As one of the contributors says later, discussing the whole conception of Indian history and time, it is not 'the enlightened student in the café in Bombay who has been victorious' in the conflict of a thousand year or more, but the old animistic field and jungle gods and demons. British rule was only a stage in Indian history and by its whole policy its method was by slow but sure degrees to encourage constitutional self-government. That Gandhi's

policy precipitated a much quicker method than had been envisaged by those who had originally planned this change of constitution was the logical result of a prophet's teaching which is supported not for inevitability which it assumes—in this case the eventual end of British rule—but as means of expediting what has always been a secret desire of the heart. Far too many of Gandhi's fellow countrymen listened to his words and saw his actions as merely ways of bringing about an independent India without achieving that personal integration which is essential to a free, responsible electorate. It is for this reason that one is on surer ground when one weighs up the lesson of his life more as the embodiment of a certain philosophy that was tried and proved successful, than as a series of conquests by non-violence of what in the public national eye was never believed to be anything other than an oppressor nation. Gandhi's real epitaph as a leader cannot be written until it is seen how much bloodshed flows from the policy which he inaugurated; until at some future date it is seen what happens when material resources become readily available to the antagonists within and without Pakistan. Certainly since his death there has been no abatement of passion and as a letter from a Priest in Madura lying in the editorial office notes: 'After the dissolving of the ashes of his cremated body, the papers more or less have ceased speaking of the event'. It is for the next hundred years, perhaps two hundred years, that reservation for a final political evaluation must be reserved.

As it is, in studying India and passing judgment on its civilization it is as well to recall that its civilization can post-date both that of Greece and Rome. Too often this factor is forgotten so that a preponderance of world thought is seen only in Roman-Hellenic terms: there is a need to see it equally flowing out of Egypt and Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley. So it is if only the work of two Indian thinkers, that of Aurobindo and the late Ananda Coomaraswamy, are here singled out for examination, it is rather the limitations of space than intention that have narrowed the selection. In fact these editorial comments whose office it has been this time to open rather than answer questions are intended to act only as a prologue to what follows; and if one may revert to the theatrical simile with which this leader began it is just to add that if what follows appears only as the first act after a prologue, then given sufficient length of life as an independent quarterly, there will be other acts at future dates, but never, let it be hoped, an epilogue. Only Time itself could write adequately of India, and History itself pass the final verdict.

NOTE

For permission to publish Gandhi's open letter to Chiang-kai-Shek (printed on page 12) grateful acknowledgements are due to Valiant Publications Limited, London, in whose biography of Gandhi by Ela Sen this letter was first published: a review of this book will be found in the 'selected notice' section.

FIVE SANTAL SONGS

I

Below the garden
You are grazing buffaloes
And you laugh at me and smile
O my life
Do not twist the stem of the bush
If you had given me your word
I would have gone with you
Anywhere.

II

You are clashing the cymbals
I am playing on the drum
Speak to me in your heart
Think of me
But I am angry with you
In my heart.

III

I called you
But you did not answer
O love of my heart
You have gone
Strolling away.

IV

Leaning by the eaves
Why do you weep?
Our love has altered
Oh do not cry
Saying my name
Again and again.

V

Grit on the ground
And the sky glares
O my love
Earth and sky are aflame
O you black berry
Do not cry, my love.

Translated by W. G. ARCHER

AN ANGLO-INDIAN OF WELLINGTON'S DAY

J. A. CHAPMAN

THE Anglo-Indian, a major in the East India Company's service in Bengal, was Thomas Duer Broughton. The year before Waterloo John Martin of Holles Street, Cavendish Square, had published Broughton's *Selections from the Popular Poetry of the Hindoos*. In 1813 John Murray of Albemarle Street, had published the same author's *Letters written in a Mahratta Camp* . . . ' descriptive of the character, manners, domestic habits and religious ceremonies of the Mahrattas '. The opportunity to gather the information embodied in this earlier volume was Broughton's having been appointed ' commander of the Resident's escort at the court of Scindia '. (That spelling must have been Mr. Murray's ; for Broughton's own was ' Seendhiya ').

The *Letters* were reviewed in the *Edinburgh* of the same year, and in the *Quarterly* of the following January. The same issue of the *Quarterly*—to mention this in passing—contained reviews, in this order, of Maria Edgeworth's *Patronage*, of Byron's *Giaour* and *Bride of Abydos*, and of De Staël Holstein's *De l'Allemagne*. That was certainly to have one's book reviewed in good company. There, however, Broughton's luck stayed, if it turned to no greater ill at his reviewer's hands than did Lord Byron's at his critics'. The sub-title of the *Giaour* ' a Fragment of a Turkish Tale ', where ' Fragment ' was held by the reviewer to be the significant word, provoked this :

> ' We remember an old Italian comedy, in which Harlequin, having a house to sell, appears on the stage with a sack full of bricks and broken mortar, and exhibiting these materials as a legitimate sample of his edifice, discreetly abstains from giving any information respecting the shape and arrangement of the building. He seems to have considered that what is solid and substantial, can receive little increase or diminution of value from mere varieties of form and distribution ; and, in like manner, it has lately been discovered, that poetical fragments may, without inconvenience, be substituted for epic or other poems '

One could be more atrabilious than that in dealing with the book of an author whose repute was so many degrees less than Lord Byron's, and atrabilious was certainly what Broughton's reviewer set out to be. Though the volume was beautifully printed on excellent paper ; although it was embellished ' With ten coloured engravings from drawings by a native artist ' ; while it abounded in varied and interesting and accurate descriptions of Scindia and his subjects, the

Quarterly man, more or less true to type, could thus declare himself regarding the *Letters :*

> ' There is little to admire in the style, and not much in the composition of these Letters. But as the writer lived three years in the midst of a Mahratta camp and, in consequence, must have had abundant opportunities of studying the character, manners, and customs of this singular people, it is next to impossible that he should be able to fill up 360 quarto pages, without throwing in such a number of facts and observations as, by selection and arrangement, might convey to the reader both instruction and amusement. In the present state of the book, however, few will probably find themselves disposed to search for either '.

The *Edinburgh* reviewer was not kinder to Major Broughton. His review has scarcely begun, when one has this to read :

> ' Though we praise Mr. Broughton . . . very sincerely, we must warn him against that dreadful propensity which young men have for writing verses. There is nothing, of which Nature has been more bountiful, than poets. They swarm like the spawn of cod-fish, with a vicious fecundity that invites and requires destruction. To publish verses is become a sort of evidence that a man wants sense ; . . . It is never too late to repent and do well : we hope Mr. Broughton will enter into proper securities with his friends to write no more verses '.

It was not before the publication of that sweeping reproof, but after it, that the major published his *Selections from the Popular Poetry of the Hindoos.* The little book, besides some sixty Hindi poems, in the quaintest of transliteration, with translations in simple verse, has an Introduction and some pages of Notes. It is the last two features that make the book still of some value ; for, as to the poems, one to-day, having learned to read the Nagri script, would read them in a Hindi text. The interest of the Introduction arises less from what is therein said of the poems and their prosody, and that, in the Vaishnava tradition, their subject is the love of the Lord Krishna and Radha for one another, than from what the Introduction reveals of the character of the soldier. If to live amongst Asiatics is to fall within a man's lot, Nature's inestimablest gift to him is that he be born without a particle of race-prejudice in him, and so, indubitably, Major Broughton was born. The Asiatics he lived amongst were sepoys, if here and there one was a Brahmin by caste, and he (of the great East India Company) a major, was in command of the Resident's escort. To have had such men, in mere conversation with him, so often quote a Hindi poet as to arouse his curiosity and interest to a degree so high as to lead in the end to the publication of the *Selections*, Broughton must have looked at the sepoys with eyes as untroubled by race-prejudice, or any other adverse feeling, as the child's looking at his father or mother. Of the many hundreds of thousands of non-Asiatics who have spent their working-lives in India, the number of those who have looked at Hindu or Muslim out of such eyes has been so small, to judge by all the evidence there is, that no mere phrase, as ' the fewest ', could convey to any uninformed person *how few.* Only the actual number would convey that. The

very great interest of the matter extends far beyond Major Broughton himself, and his activity as an author; for, were human nature generally, and English human nature in particular, less weighed down by race-prejudice, not only the social history of British-India but the political history also would have been very different. And there is, to put it so, as India and Pakistan are still within the Empire, more social and political history to make. And the better way to make it, as Lord Hailey emphasised in a speech in the House of Lords, is to take an interest in the living literature of the province, and to show it in conversation with any Indian.

The Notes Major Broughton added, are there to throw light on the obscurer allusions in the poems. From one of them one learns that Krishna and his companions played Hide-and-Seek: they hid in pairs, while one stayed out to play seeker. Another note explains that *Indra ke mundil*, Indra's dwelling, is a poetical term for the lotus. A third is a note to 'The mystic cruise upon her knee', as follows:

> 'A small square lamp, moulded out of a piece of dough or paste, with four lips: in each lip is a wick; a fifth in the centre. This cruise, called *manuk-diya*, or "the ruby-lamp", is presented by the females of the bridegroom's family to the bride, who waves it seven times around the head of her husband, when he enters the nuptial chamber'.

I left the British Museum, where I examined the two books, unprovided with the text of one of Major Broughton's translations; but here is another, in the same Vaishnava tradition: the speaker is Radha, and it is of the Lord Krishna, of course, that she speaks:

> 'For the fragrant sandal tree—and serving
> it I thought desire would be fulfilled—
> I mistook him; but simul tree merely,
> thorny, fragrantless, he proves to be.
> Madhava, though where I dwell he dwelleth,
> hath become enamoured of another.
> I, a damsel lovely, so accomplished—
> I have lost my pride and all my beauty.
> Friend, the lotus thrown into the basket,
> made of bitter nim leaves, withereth,
> and the wild rice groweth sweet and blooming.
> It has chanced my Love this day is coming
> after days spent with her—oh, so many!—
> but how greet whom now my heart distrusteth?
>
> Vidyapati saith in song: "O Maiden,
> he, thy swain, in proper season cometh.
> Maid arise, and let thy heart be joyful;
> for thy swain, for lo! thy swain here cometh".'

The imagery is very charming. Radha thinks of herself, for a time neglected, as a lotus in a basket of bitter nim leaves. The nim is a common Indian tree; much used to give shade on highroads. Its essential oil has purifying and curative properties, and a twig, its end so much bitten as to be frayed, is the toothbrush to which an Indian will help himself. The wild rice growing sweet is a rival.

The author of the poem is that Vidyapati who names himself at the end, following a practice very common amongst Indian and Persian poets. In his *ghazaliyyat*, for instance, Hafiz names himself at the end of each, and so Ghalib, the Delhi poet of the days of the Indian Mutiny.

Major Broughton's interest, I have said, was aroused by his Brahmin sepoys' citations of the poems. They are an expression, in part, of those feelings out of which Vaishnavism arose, and, in turn, an expression of it. Professor Ghosh, in his contribution to *The Legacy of India*, begins :

> ' The vernacular literatures grew out of the theistic movement known as Vaishnavism. The movement makes its first appearance about the second century B.C., when the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are found to be losing their original character of heroic poems through the interpolation of sectarian religious matter by Vaishnava priests. Vaishnava influence becomes more pronounced in the subsequent recensions of those poems, . . . giving them, in their final form, the character of Vaishnava scriptures. The *Bhagavad-gita* gives the most authoritative exposition of the creed about the third century B.C. [? A.D.], and the *Bhagavata Purana*, next only to the *Gita* in influence, appeared about the tenth century A.D. The movement reaches its highest development through the preachings of Ramanuja in the twelfth century, of Ramananda and Madhvacharya in the thirteenth, and of Chaitanya in the sixteenth. It then became what it has remained since—viz., the most important branch of Hinduism, both in the number of adherents and the impulse it has given to vernacular literature.
>
> Vishnu, from whose worship the creed derives its name, arose out of the craving in the average human being for a personal god to whom love and devotion could be offered as to another human being. The Vedic deities . . whom Vishnu supplanted, were personifications of natural phenomena, . . . No intimate spiritual communion could be established with them. More distant was the Supreme or Absolute of Vedic philosophy, resting on metaphysical heights attainable only by the highly cultured Brahmin. The vast masses required a god less neutral, impersonal, and intellectual. Vaishnavism met their requirements with its doctrine of Bhalti (devotion) to Vishnu. Because it was a popular religion, it used the vernaculars more than Sanskrit for its literature '.

Madhava, I should have said, is another of their many names for the Lord Krishna.

THE WITNESS BOX

II.—*An Open Letter from Gandhi to Chiang-kai-Shek*

[It is thought that there are times when the suppression of news in the public press is desirable: there are, and in such a category naturally enough falls information which in time of war would be of direct assistance to the enemy. That is perhaps why in both English and American papers the following open letter was suppressed: on the other hand there may have been more strategic reasons for its suppression. In any case, that is no present editorial concern, and it is published here without further comment for its documentary worth in expressing an attitude on the part of Gandhi to China which it appears to have been the consistent aim of the newspaper world at large to hide.]

9th August, 1942

Dear Generalissimo,

I can never forget the five hours' close contact I had with you and your noble wife in Calcutta. I had always felt drawn towards you in your fight for freedom, and that contact and our conversation brought China and her problems still nearer to me. Long ago, between 1905 and 1918, when I was in South Africa, I was in constant touch with the small Chinese colony in Johannesburg. I knew them first as clients and then as comrades in the Indian passive resistance struggle in South Africa. I came in touch with them in Mauritius also. I learnt then to admire their thrift, industry, resourcefulness and internal unity. Later in India I had a very fine Chinese friend living with me for a few years and we all learnt to like him.

I have thus felt greatly attracted towards your great country and, in common with my countrymen, our sympathy has gone out to you in your terrible struggle. Our mutual friend, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose love of China is only excelled, if at all, by his love of his own country, has kept us in intimate touch with the developments of the Chinese struggle.

Because of this feeling I have towards China and my earnest desire that our two great countries should come closer to one another and co-operate to their mutual advantage, I am anxious to explain to you that my appeal to the British Power to withdraw from India is not meant in any shape or form to weaken India's defence, against the Japanese or embarrass you in your struggle. India must not submit to any aggressor or invader and must resist him. I would not be guilty of purchasing the freedom of my country at the cost of your country's freedom. That problem does not arise before me as I am clear that India cannot gain her freedom in this way, and a Japanese domination of either India or China would be equally injurious to the other country and to world peace. That domination must, therefore, be prevented, and I should like India to play her natural and rightful part in this.

I feel India cannot do so while she is in bondage. India has been a helpless witness of the withdrawals from Malaya, Singapore and Burma. We must learn the lesson from these tragic events and prevent by all means at our disposal a repetition of what befell these unfortunate countries. But unless we are free, we can do nothing to prevent it, and the same process might well occur again, crippling India and China disastrously. I do not want a repetition of this tragic tale of woe.

Our proffered help has repeatedly been rejected by the British Government, and the recent failure of the Cripps Mission has left a deep wound which is still running. Out of that anguish has come the cry for immediate withdrawal of British Power so that India can look after herself and help China to the best of her ability.

I have told you of my faith in non-violence and of my belief in the effectiveness of this method if the whole nation could turn to it. That faith in it is as firm as ever. But I realize that India today as a whole has not that faith and belief, and the Government in free India would be formed from the various elements composing the nation.

Today the whole of India is impotent and feels frustrated. The Indian Army consists largely of people who have joined up because of economic pressure. They have no feeling of a cause to fight for, and in no sense are they a national army. Those of us who could fight for a cause, for India and China, with armed forces or with non-violence, cannot, under the foreign heel, function as they want to. And yet our people know for certain that India free can play even a decisive part not only on her own behalf, but also on behalf of China and world peace. Many, like me, feel that it is not proper or manly to remain in the helpless state and allow events to overwhelm us when a way to effective action can be open to us. They feel, therefore, that every possible effort should be made to ensure independence and that freedom of action which is so urgently needed. This is the origin of my appeal to the British Power to end immediately the unnatural connection between Britain and India.

Unless we make that effort, there is grave danger of public feeling in India going into wrong and harmful channels. There is every likelihood of subterranean sympathy for Japan growing simply in order to weaken and oust British authority in India. This feeling may take the place of robust confidence in our ability never to look to outsiders for help in winning our freedom. We have to learn self-reliance and develop the strength to work out our own salvation. This is only possible if we make a determined effort to free ourselves from bondage. That freedom has become a present necessity to enable us to take our due place among the free nations of the world.

To make it perfectly clear that we want to prevent in every way Japanese aggression, I would personally agree, and I am sure the Government of Free India would agree, that the Allied powers might, under treaty with us, keep their armed forces in India and use the

country as a base for operations against the threatened Japanese attack.

I need hardly give you my assurance that, as the author of the new move in India, I shall take no hasty action. And whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China, or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China. I am trying to enlist world opinion in favour of a proposition which to me appears self-proved and which must lead to the strengthening of India's and China's defence. I am also educating public opinion in India and conferring with my colleagues. Needless to say, any movement against the British Government with which I may be connected will be essentially non-violent. I am straining every nerve to avoid a conflict with British authority. But if in the vindication of the freedom, which has become an immediate desideratum, this becomes inevitable, I shall not hesitate to run any risk, however great.

Very soon you shall have completed five years of war against Japanese aggression and invasion and all the sorrow and misery that these have brought to China. My heart goes out to the people of China in deep sympathy and in admiration for their heroic struggle and endless sacrifices in the cause of their country's freedom and integrity against tremendous odds. I am convinced that this heroism and sacrifice cannot be in vain; they must bear fruit. To you, to Madame Chiang and to the great people of China, I send my earnest and sincere wishes of your success. I look forward to the day when a free India and a free China will co-operate together in friendship and brotherhood for their own good and for the good of Asia and the world.

In anticipation of your permission, I am taking the liberty of publishing this letter in the *Harijan*.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. Gandhi

DIVINE BECOMING

The Message of Sri Aurobindo

MORWENNA DONNELLY

I

THOSE who have been fortunate enough to read *The Life Divine* will have little hesitation in ranking Sri Aurobindo as a thinker of impressive stature, and his great exposition of the life of the Spirit as one of the most important books of our time—perhaps, as one authority has maintained, the most important. The mystic does not often combine the formidable qualifications of a first-rate philosopher, psychologist and creative thinker, but in the work of Sri Aurobindo a visionary intensity is balanced by psychological acuity and the clarity of a high, subtle and penetrating intellect.

At its best the Indian mind is crowned by a synthetizing vision denied to the analytic intellect of the West, and it is this power of synthesis, of dispassionate discrimination and lucid definition, which gives to the genius of this Indian master of the spiritual life one of its most commanding qualities.

In *The Life Divine* Sri Aurobindo sets out, to use his own words, 'to discover what is the reality and significance of our existence as conscious beings in the material universe and in what direction and how far that significance once discovered leads us, to what human or divine future'. It is a journey that takes us through one thousand one hundred and eighty-six closely reasoned pages. Its object is not only to re-assess the thought of the ancient Vedic thinkers, where, we are told, 'we have the widest and profoundest extant synthetic vision of spirit and man and cosmos' and of the Gita which is founded on the original Vedanta of the Upanishads, but to create upon this basis the ideal of a new ascent to a higher principle of consciousness in the life of humanity. To this new spiritual evolution—or revolution—Sri Aurobindo gives the term *gnosis;* spiritual being.

The Life Divine has fed very deeply from the teaching of the Gita so that it is in the two volumes of *Essays on the Gita* that the fundamental principles underlying the greater work are to be found, though in actual fact, these were published later. The Gita, like the Gospels, has suffered much from being approached by the eye of prepossession. Verses have been torn out of their context to support the teaching of divergent schools and to harmonize with a quietism and impersonalism that have no foundation in an impartial study of the complete text. The object of the *Essays* has been to restore to the Gita the totality of its vision, not to bend it to the service of a prejudiced or partisan view, and to present its teaching in a manner relevant to

modern needs. The result is an elucidation of the text which brings out vividly the full power and beauty of the Indian conception of God, of man's nature and destiny and final beatitude of love in union with his Creator.

The Gita sets out to solve a spiritual and practical enigma; it is therefore not primarily a metaphysical treatise, though its metaphysics inspire and consolidate its teaching. The enigma is that of action. How shall a man act in the world, since 'action is the greater part of life and the test and formulated power of a man's values of being', and attain to full spiritual stature? Is action incompatible with the divine life? In solving this problem the Gita takes the unpropitious example of a man faced with launching a terrible war and killing his fellow-men, and on these grounds builds its gospel of affirmation that action, inaugurated from a spiritual orientation in the Source of action, transcends spiritual quietism. To attain that orientation, to act in harmony with the Divine Will and not from the corrupted sources of the ego, is the central core of its teaching. Briefly, it is the 'Way' of an integral Yoga synthetizing knowledge, will and devotion; for it is only through an absolute self-giving of heart and mind and will—of the whole being—that the soul can attain perfection. The perfected man approaches God 'with no single side or portion of himself, exclusive spiritualized mind, blinding light of the heart intense but divorced from largeness, or sole aspiration of the will in works, but in all the perfectly illumined ways of his being and his becoming, his soul and his nature'.

The foundation of this Yoga is the concept of universality, the knowledge of God as transcendent and immanent Reality. It is based on the acceptance of the three eternal states of the Divine Being; first as eternal, immutable self-existence, the basis and support of all existent things; secondly, as spirit mutable in nature, manifested by her as all existences; and thirdly as Transcendent Divine, who can be both of these states at once 'because he is something other than and more than these two whether taken separately or together'. Matter is 'substance and power of spirit and could not exist if it were anything else, for nothing can exist which is not substance and power of Brahman'. It is 'a product of Energy, and mind and life must be regarded as superior products of the same Energy. If we admit the existence of a cosmic Spirit, the energy must be spiritual; life and mind must be independent products of a spiritual energy and themselves powers and manifestations of spirit'. Again, matter is '[divine] delight offering itself to its own consciousness as an object . . . as a formal basis of objective knowledge, action and delight of existence'. This energy or force originates in the pure Existence of God through 'an inherent self-consciousness inseparable from its being . . . throwing itself out as force of movement of consciousness which is creative of forces, forms and worlds'. In this spiritual monism, therefore, there is no antinomy between spirit and matter. The connecting medium is 'psyche or

soul-power and the primary action psychological and qualitative, not physical and quantitative '. It is a conception of ultimate and primary reality in harmony with the thought of some modern physicists who define matter as a derivative reality of force or consciousness. In the thought of Sri Aurobindo all existence is sustained by this unique, inherent power of consciousness, deeply involved in the inanimate and in the lower forms of life and only partially unveiled in man. It is this undeveloped power of consciousness which is responsible for our errors and failures and misconceptions. Evil and suffering spring from it for they are

> ' the creations, positive in effect, negative in essence, of a distorting consciousness which has fallen from the total and unifying knowledge of itself into some error of division and partial experience. This is the fall of man typified in the poetic parable of the Hebrew Genesis . . . deviation from the full and pure acceptance of God and himself, or rather God in himself, into a dividing consciousness which brings with it . . . the fruit of a divided being '.

It is a ' full and pure acceptance ' constantly enjoined by Jesus on his hearers and pointed by the sense of unity inherent in the child, and the wholeness of the pure in heart.

Consciousness itself is variable in status, condition and operation. In the creation of the material world, by a plunge into matter it is veiled in the Inconscient and must evolve out of this ignorance and rediscover its fullness. At its highest point it is Supermind, the light of *gnosis*, the Truth-Consciousness of God, of which the Overmind is the middle term and delegate between the Ignorance. Between the darkness of the Ignorance and this ' luminous Overmind corona ' our human mind, or what we term our mind, ' a surface mental action ' not to be confused in any way with the totality of consciousness, struggles to rise from darkness into the light. Thus to Sri Aurobindo, Consciousness, in some status or another, is a principle of all existence. He calls it ' the fundamental thing in existence '. In the human being consciousness is both above and below mind, with a movable ' stress ', and increasing in integration as it ascends. It is his criticism of psycho-analysis that it greatly exaggerates the role of the subconscious, and will ' look from down up and explain the higher lights by the lower obscurities '. And he states in his *Bases of Yoga* ' you must know the whole before you can know the part and the highest before you can truly understand the lowest '.

In the tiny area of consciousness we have developed, we form certain largely erroneous mental perceptions in relation to our nature and that of the universe which serve a rough utilitarian purpose in our traffic with life, but which are impotent to solve the fundamental problems of existence, since the limitation of our consciousness continually falsifies experience, and cannot through the imperfect instrumentation of mind do anything else. Nature, in the psychological action of the three *gunas*, tamas, rajas, and sattwa,

subjects us to the domination of the ego and desire and personal will. Hemmed in by these illusions we can have no true self-knowledge and therefore no world or God-knowledge, for reasoning can only be conclusive ' if the perception of things on which it rests is both a true and a whole seeing '. This cannot always be true of mental perception even in relation to the most easily ascertainable reality of all, that of the physical world, and still less so in an order of reality which exhausts the range of mental cognition.

In this state a man may well ask how he can hope to find the uncorrupted springs of action, and reconcile the 'full active life of man with the inner life in the highest self and spirit '. The Gita replies that he can do so through the union of knowledge, works, and love.

II

In spite of what marauders of the Gita's text have done to establish the pre-eminence of either works, or quietistic withdrawal from action as the one soveriegn way to God, Sri Aurobindo makes it clear that the teaching of the Gita places no such exclusive emphasis on action or contemplation. Negative passivity, the renunciation of life and works, is admitted, ' but only with a minor permissive sanction '. It is the dryest and most difficult way to God, the way of the ' razor's edge '. Against intolerant asceticism or pride of knowledge it sets its face firmly, as against a ' passive relationless indentity [which] excludes love and action '. A dimunition of works is not indispensible ; it is not even advisable ; it may be a dangerous example. This idea is elaborated in *The Life Divine*, where it is urged that the passive and dynamic aspects, being part of the Divine Being, must also represent the perfect human pattern. ' It is possible, indeed, to exist only in status, with the force of being self-gathered and immobile in the self ; but, even so, to be in dynamis as well as in status is the integrality of existence '. Not cessation from action, but renunciation of desire is the guiding principle of the Gita. The Integral Way lies in the perfect synthesis of knowledge, works and love. The pattern of its following is in the manner in which Arjuna accepts the truth ' with the adoration of his heart, the submission of his will and the understanding of his intelligence '.

This knowledge is not mental cognisance, but evolution into a higher spiritual consciousness, a knowledge of heart and spirit. Salvation, which is dependent on perfection, cannot come without self-knowledge and only ascent into a higher principle of consciousness can bring that self-knowledge and God-knowledge.[1]

Before outlining the steps of the Gita's sadhana, or system of self-discipline, which will lead to this perfection, it would be well to indicate briefly the psychological analysis of the individual on which

[1] ' Ancient Indian thought meant by knowledge a consciousness which possesses the highest Truth in a direct perception and in self-experience ' *The Life Divine* (Vol. II, part I, p. 595)

it is based. In each being is seated the Supreme Self, Paramatman, the Purushottama, Supreme Lord and Brahman, the divine witness of our actions ; what we should call Spirit. Within is also the individual Purusha, or soul, whose true action is suppressed by the domination of the ego, defined as ' a sense which makes him [man] identify himself with the creation that Nature has made of him, with the varying mind and life and body she has constructed '. This action of Nature, or Prakriti, subjects the soul to the three modes or Gunas, which are her qualities, sattwa, rajas, and tamas.[2]

To withdraw the soul from outward concentration in the ego to inward union with God is the way of liberation. This turning inward to seek God—' seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness [his immortal dharma or law] '—is the primary condition on which the Gita's sadhana is built. It is necessary, therefore, to note very closely the exact distinctions of Self, Soul and Ego-personality as they are used here. It is the extinction of ego (what we sometimes loosely define as self) with its divided consciousness and avid desires which the mysticism of the Gita teaches, and the withdrawl of the soul into the primordial purity and unity of God, whose kingdom is within. ' God is a Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth '. That is, in the supreme principle of their own being and in the bliss, purity and light of the Divine Truth-Consciousness.

The first step then, is the development of the sattwic qualities of goodness, humility, chastity, compassion, and the attainment of inner quietness and impersonality. The fretful disequilibrium of the ego with its ambitions and ephemeral desires, its subjective constructions of pain and pleasure, liking and disliking, together with sin—the revolt of the rajasic propensities against the self-mastery of the spirit—must all be overcome. But ethical action to the Gita is only a means of self-purification ; man can never attain to the highest by virtue alone, though by its practice he can develop a first capacity for attainment. When the Yogin has achieved this equality and perfect inner immobility, he must next offer his action to God as a sacrifice. The idea of himself as the author of the action will still persist, but the fruits will be offered to God ; the Yogin will no longer seize them personally as his own ; failure and success, praise or blame will not disturb his impersonal calm. All will be offered up to the Lord of the Sacrifice. Thirdly he will act, but surrender all notion of himself as the doer, acting in the consciousness that it is the energy-force (or power of manifestation) of God which is the sole doer. He will act in the knowledge of this force as God's supreme power, and in a renunciation, a surrender, of all actions to their Source, seeing himself only as a channel for their effectuation in the world. All sense of action as being individual will cease. United then with

[2] Psychologically these can be defined roughly as contemplative mental type (sattwic) active type (rajasic) and inert, ignorant type (tamasic). In nature Sri Aurobindo defines them as equilibrium, kinesis, inertia.

God in knowledge and in works, in mind and will, he will act, not from egoistic choice, but from the Truth-Consciousness of the Divine and Eternal Being which will possess him. 'I live, yet not I, but it is Christ who liveth in me'.

There is yet a further step the disciple must take. He must know God as 'the one who eternally becomes the Many, the Many who in their apparent division are still eternally one'. He must know that there is no dichotomy of being itself, but a multiplicity of status of the one Being 'in all his relations of difference'. This integral knowledge comes only by love: 'a highest bhakti . . . that is calm and deep and luminous with widest knowledge'. This profound love of the soul, 'its heart's knowledge', is the core of the integral beatitude, 'when the heart's fathomless vision completes the mind's absolute experience'. When man has once seen this vision of his true nature and of God as the Supreme Being, Creator of the universe and all beings, 'his whole life aspiration becomes a surpassing love and fathomless adoration of the Divine'. Made one with God 'in being, consciousness and divine bliss . . . the liberated spirit can know infinitely, love illimitably, act unfalteringly in the authentic power of a highest immortality and a perfect freedom'. Thus, says Krishna, the divine Teacher, this supreme vision 'cannot be won by Veda or austerities or gifts or sacrifice; it can be seen, known, entered into only by that bhakti which regards, adores and loves Me alone in all things'.

Love is the crown of works and the crown of knowledge. Perfect love is the key to perfect knowledge. Its supreme seal on life is reflected by man living in the world for God.

The teaching of the Gita, as it is presented by Sri Aurobindo in these *Essays*, points then to the perfection of the being through an offering of the whole existence in which heart, mind and will are fully integrated. It says in effect: 'Be ye also perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect', and makes the attainment of that perfection possible through the depth, sanity and wide synthesis of the spiritual way which it advocates. It is the loss of the petty ego and the putting on of the true spiritual nature, the nature of Christ and of Buddha, that we are bidden to achieve. And in this the Elect—or in Christian terminology 'the chosen'—are *all* those, even the most hopeless and sinful, who can make that initial act of self-surrender. 'If', says Krishna, 'even a man of very evil conduct turns to Me with a sole and entire love . . . (he will) obtain eternal peace'. It is the redemptive mercy of the Gospel.

On the subject of love the psychological scrutiny of the Gita is, however, very piercing. There are many subtle corruptions of the egoistic nature—even of the sattwic, the highest ethical nature—which must be watched over. The disciple must not fall into the self-centredness which seeks an egoistic seclusion from 'the trouble of participation in the world-action'. Neither must he fall into any error of partial love for God. And partial love means for the Gita

that love which turns to God for succour or deliverance in suffering; which seeks him for his gifts, or for aid and protection; or which, still ignorant, turns to him for knowledge and illumination. So long as the disciple is limited to these forms 'there may persist even in their highest and noblest Godward turn a working of the three gunas'. In short, God must be loved and adored for himself. Here the object of the Gita's constant emphasis on knowledge is made clear. Though love brings the supreme knowledge (truth-consciousness) love without knowledge is a snare. This may seem a paradox. It means simply that the highest bhakti cannot come unless it is based upon a real discernment of the nature of God, man and the cosmos. A man cannot act in truth unless the ground of his action is a perfect knowledge. The fruit of the spiritual life 'is according to the knowledge, the faith and the work and cannot exceed their limitations'.

In this process the Gita stresses the need for each individual to find and follow the unique inner law—swadharma—of his own being, which in turn possesses its own law of progress. Even if it is defective it is better than the well-performed rule of another's nature. This inward law is the being's natural way of evolution, and to follow any other is dangerous. In the forward adventure of faith a man's guiding light will be 'his will to believe, to live what he thinks or sees to be the truth of himself and of existence' for this rises from a divine formulation in him which he must develop. St. Paul expressed this as obtaining 'mercy of the Lord to be faithful'—inner guidance to act and think the truth; not obedience to a compulsive standard of belief thrust upon him by church or state, but freedom to hear and follow the intimate direction of God in his own heart.

III

This then, in a necessarily compressed and curtailed summary, is the metaphysical basis and the spiritual teaching which pervades the thought of Sri Aurobindo and is expanded and creatively applied to further reaches of man's development in *The Life Divine*. It is a monism which recognizes the distinction between Being and becoming, but does not force it into an opposition. God is immanent in his creation; but he is also Supreme Self-Existence and Transcendent Divine. He is not equated either with his creation or the production of creative energy and activity, or with his Supreme Self-Existence, the basis of creation, since in his third status he exceeds them both. The distinction therefore between immanence and transcendence is not held all together, as in theism, by the doctrine of personal identity between God and man, though the conception of God as Supreme Person, together with the retention of individual survival, is one of the most interesting aspects of Sri Aurobindo's thought, and not in accordance with what (perhaps too credulously) we have come to understand as the teaching of Brahmanism on these points.

Against the 'fanatics of the Absolute' the 'intransigent absolutists of the spirit who . . . yearn after . . . the dissolution of all that we are in life and mind', he is fundamentally at variance. Though this way is admitted by the Gita it is not 'the full and natural movement of the spiritualized human nature'. 'A featureless extinction may be a vigorous demand of the mind's logic of self-annulment', he writes, 'it is not the last word of the supreme mystery'. To him the miracle of God as 'a Supreme Person and apparent vast Impersonal that are one', is echoed in 'the inner person, the spiritual individual, that persistent miracle of our being'. Existence is meaningless without an Existent. God is the essence and source of all (pure) personality, therefore he is an Infinite Person. In the Gita the expression of that personal term is made manifest at the close, where Krishna abjures Arjuna to take complete refuge in him.

> 'The words of this passage express the most complete, intimate and living relation possible between God and man. . . . The phrases used . . . give the most intense prominence possible and an utmost importance to the personal truth and presence of the Godhead. It is no abstract Absolute of the philosopher, no indifferent impersonal Presence or ineffable Silence intolerant of all relations to whom this complete surrender of all our works can be made. . . . It is a Master of our works, a Friend and Lover of our soul, an intimate Spirit of our life'.

Again, 'a deep and large love and adoration . . . ask for a relation and an intimate personal closeness'. The mystery of this Supreme Person is the secret of love and devotion, for though personality is an attribute of the Divine it is not the ego-personality of the lower nature. We must not confuse Person with our experience of Ego.

In supporting the persistence of the spiritual being against dissolution in the featureless Absolute, Sri Aurobindo examines at some length the position of the Buddhist Nihilists, the Illusionists and the question of Maya. The many sides of this bristling problem are clearly put forward and turned in the light of a keen analysis. He maintains that a faulty interpretation of the Upanishads gave rise to the uncompromising Illusionist system, which holds that the universe is a figment of consciousness imposed on the mind: that escape is only to be found in the dissolution of a self that is also illusory, and a return to the Unmanifest. But God 'cannot create non-existent things in an illusory universe'. If he is Real what proceeds from him cannot be unreal. If he has no need of manifestation he has no need of illusion. Again, if all is a devastating illusion, how can we be sure that experience of the Supreme Self is not also an illusion? In such a system all is a vast illusion swallowing nothing but illusion: 'God and ourselves and the universe become myths of Maya'. There is, however, an 'element of unreality in the Real', which is not a fact of being but a formation of consciousness. This formation of consciousness compels the mind to place its own invalid mental structures upon the universe, which produces an appearance of illusion; this power of illusion is heightened when consciousness passes too suddenly or violently to Reality without

understanding the transitional stages. To obtain a true and unifying knowledge, it is necessary to discover the link between cosmic and transcendent Reality.

To this Indian mystic, to borrow Keyserling, 'joy is the characteristic emotion of the completely spiritualized life'. It is the sharing of the Divine Ananda which created the world for its delight, for the sheer bliss of creation. The essence and whole constituent of true bhakti is a delight in God. The perfected heart is possessed by 'the pure and divine passion of the presence of the Beloved', bringing 'an insistent joy of labour for God in yourself and for God in all beings'. This vision of God does not divorce from life; it urges man to an intimate engagement with life, living in the world for God and the consummation of his divine purpose, sharing all life as part of his own, loving God in all creatures, his neighbour's Self as his own Self, seeing nothing but the presence of God everywhere, meeting his delight in all things and in every moment. It is thus a mysticism very far from the spirituality of Tertullian, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, St. John of the Cross, the Franciscan Spirituals and à Kempis with his 'let us then despise and neglect the world'. In its teaching, perfection, the exceeding of ourselves, is 'the cross surmounted by an invisible crown'. The joy of Easter Day is the abiding reality, and though crucifixion is its price, the crucifixion of the ego, suffering can never be clung to as an end in itself.

For Sri Aurobindo, though the highest experience of God is ineffable, God is not inaccessible: he does not make our search for him difficult. The meaning of existence is 'self-implied in the self-nature of things and discoverable here': it is not—and this is where he differs radically from theism—dependent on a revelation of God's will. But in the search for the Highest, as the Gita warns, the disciple must expect 'nights of long exile from the Light'. Those who may have been misled by the idea that the Dark Night of the soul is unknown to Hindu mystics should study Sri Aurobindo's comments to disciples on Dryness and Suffering in Yoga, contained in a recently published volume of his *Letters* (1947). The immolation of the ego and the re-orientation to a new centre of consciousness must inevitably be attended by suffering, which stems from the involution of the soul in ignorance and its imperfect response to reality.

The Divine Life then, 'is a life of essential, spontaneous and inherent unity'. The aim of men developing in the world, 'a supreme recovery of unity with God and with all in God'. 'To become is our life's significance'. Becoming is putting on the divine nature. It is the ascent to a new status of consciousness, for

> 'greater consciousness means greater life. Man, the mental being, has an imperfect life because mind is not the first and highest power of consciousness of the Being: even if mind were perfected there would still be something yet to be realized, not yet manifested. What is involved and emergent is not a Mind, but a Spirit, and mind is not a native dynamism of consciousness of the Spirit: supermind, the light of *gnosis*, is its native dynamism'.

Again, '*gnosis* is the effective principle of the Spirit, a highest dynamis of the spiritual existence. The gnostic individual would be the consummation of the spiritual man': he would reach 'to the last and supreme state of the epiphany of the Creation'.

It is with the development of the gnostic being and the building up of a gnostic community, incarnating the harmony, perfect relation and relatedness, the spontaneous and intuitive realization of Truth in being and in action which is the culmination of *The Life Divine*. Although to Sri Aurobindo Christianity and Buddhism are 'tears on the fire of the world's suffering', his criticism of Christians is that they propose only to produce the sattwic religious ego. He maintains that Christianity

> 'has no higher spiritual or psychological knowledge behind it and ignores the foundations of human character and the source of the difficulty —the duality of mind, life and body. Unless there is a descent of a new Power of Consciousness . . . which will provide a new foundation and a lifting of the centre of consciousness above the mind, the Kingdom on earth can only be an ideal, not a fact realized in the general earth-consciousness'. (*Letters*).

It is a criticism that plainly needs qualifying. Admittedly Christianity has no metaphysic. That may be its strength. What is a more serious concern is that axiomatic injunctions to spiritual behaviour, however indisputable, do not solve the problems of attainment. This can only rest on a profound and accurate psychological and spiritual discernment, and few Western masters of the spiritual life have yet approached that synthesis of psychological insight with spiritual knowledge on which the writer of the Gita founded his sadhana.

It has been stated once or twice recently in this country that only a radical change of *consciousness* can now avert a second calamity overtaking the West. Exactly what that radical change of consciousness means, or how it is to be effected, is not explained. It is, therefore, time perhaps that we should listen to, and try and adapt into the conditions of our own spiritual heritage, the teaching of a mystic who knows what that new consciousness entails, and who has effected it within himself.

Maladjustment in the individual and between the individual and the world, therefore between nation and nation, comes from an imperfect knowledge of the laws of being, which in its turn results in the blind and desperate struggle of the individual to break out of the prison of his own discord. Lacking the true means of a unifying spiritual knowledge, harmony, instead of being achieved through ascent to a higher principle of being, is a matter of rough and imperfect compromise between ego and ego, and within the ego itself. Like the bitter antinomy of State and Individual it could not exist were we in possession of 'that knowledge [which] belongs to a deeper principle of our being to which oneness and integrality are native. It is only by finding that in ourselves that we can solve the problem of our existence and with it the problem of the true way of individual and communal living'.

Sri Aurobindo believes, not only that it is the only real solution of our dilemmas, but the inevitable ascent to which human evolution is now being impelled. His Integral Yoga is, therefore, truly a Yoga of Transformation, designed to effectuate that 'descent of a new Power of Consciousness'. Its subtle psychology—subtle, because unlike the empirical psychology of the West, Indian metaphysical psychology is founded on the most exacting introspective analysis and observation—is the outcome of long personal study, and the study of others. It is not merely 'another Yoga'. It aims at an integralizing of the whole individual, mental, physical and spiritual, and not at the development of one specific side as in Hatha, Raja, Karma, Jnana, Bhakti or the Tantric systems of Yoga. These systems have been used for centuries in India, and though they have developed the individual, they are inadequate to the instrumentation of this particular aim.

Psychological insight, invaluable as it may be in a teacher, is only one of Sri Aurobindo's qualifications for speaking with authority on the life of the Spirit. The most important is, of course, the mystical experience which has set its seal on his life, his work, and his thought. The quality of that mysticism can only be gauged by reading his books. The intellect at work there expresses itself naturally in English (for he was brought up in this country); it is familiar with our literature and our scientific thought; it can move easily from a discussion of the psychology of St. Augustine to a criticism of Sir James Jeans, the anti-mystical nonsense of Mr. Leonard Woolf, and to answer questions put to him on some statements of McTaggart. It is, therefore, a mind doubly enriched by the traditions of two hemispheres. Because he is a poet as well as a mystic, Sri Aurobindo's vision is both creative and prophetic. I believe there is no greater mystical thinker in the world today.

THE INDIAN TIME-TABLE

The Background to its Art and Thought

WILLY HAAS

IT is often said that the Indian is indolent and passive. That is not true. The Indians are one of the most diligent peoples on the face of the earth. Time runs differently in India from what it does in Europe. The time-table which the Indians have created for themselves, and in which they live is different from the European one. The American does not work more quickly, or more, than the European, but his time, only slightly hampered by history and tradition, runs away with him. Indian time is not only burdened by history and tradition, but is also deflected, retarded, diverted from its straight course along its own river-bed by many other currents of time—ahistoric and pre-historic, animistic, totemistic, mythological currents of time—the sum-total of these, which, for the European, are irregular time-factors, we shall call the Indian doctrine of the transmigration of souls and reincarnation, and we will later on give detailed reasons for calling it so. Nothing of the real Indian life, of the real Indian character can be explained unless one first understands this doctrine thoroughly.

We have here spoken of different time-tables, measurements of time, currents of time, or, to give a more exact designation, of various 'types' of time, and we will retain this conception. There is no reason why we should leave things which are as simple as daily life (but also as complicated as daily life) in a pretentious semi-obscurity, only because there are no simple linguistic terms by which to designate them. What is meant here has nothing to do with modern mathematico-physical theories, although these theories presumably have something to do with it. It is, however, incomparably closer to concrete life. Whoever has once loved, knows that love is eternal, that it is impregnated with eternity, that, at every moment, it possesses the dimensions of 'one' eternity, even though it ends sooner or later in the historical time-table. The relationship of time and space is, for the lover, different from the regular relationship of everyday. This phenomenon is repeated in literature, both prose and poetry. Proust uses different measurements of space and time from those of Homer, just as Kafka's narratives are set in other measurements of space and time than Balzac's novels are. It is true that these obvious and fundamental phenomena in modern literature have never been analysed. The primitive man lives in relation to an entirely different time-table from that of a Londoner or a Berliner.

The arrangement of time in which the Hindu lives and spends his life is different from that of other peoples—different also from that of the Indian Mohammedan or the Indian Parsee. These phenomena cannot be understood if the Indian doctrine of the transmigration of souls and re-incarnation is not properly understood. And, as already stated, without this background nothing about the Indian, the Hindu Indian, can be understood.

The doctrine of the transmigration of the soul seems to be a very simple and logical creation. After the death of a living being the soul migrates into another one. It embodies or incarnates itself in one living creature after another in order to atone for some fault or to reap a reward. It ascends or descends in the hierarchy of the human and animal worlds according to the merit acquired or sins committed in each individual life until finally it becomes united with the Universal Soul, with Brahma, or, in the Buddhist version, enters into Nirvana or Nibbanah. This sounds almost as simple as, let us say, the Christian doctrine of the life after death. In reality it is an exceedingly complex and contradictory structure, which bears all the marks of its gradual formation, while the Christian doctrine of heaven, purgatory and hell is really a clear and simple creation. Here we will touch on only one of these contradictions, to which we will again refer later—namely, that the Indian soul changes its individuality in the course of transmigration, whereas in the Christian doctrine of the Beyond, the soul retains its individuality—so that, in Hinduism, the individual which committed the sin is not the identical one which is punished, an inconsistency which, according to European conceptions, robs the Hindu doctrine of all ethical meaning.[1] It is true that the yogi is already rewarded in ' this ' life,—but with what ? With a kind of magical increase of power, which he can use for good or for evil, for ascetic exercises which mostly are ethically neutral. This also has little to do with sin and atonement, merit and reward, according to our European ideas.

These inconsistencies lie on the surface and are easily recognizable. But the whole complex of the Indian transmigration of souls and re-incarnation requires a more exact historical, sociological and anthropological analysis.

First of all, the doctrine consists of three different elements : an animistic one which is ahistoric, a mythico-genealogical one which bears a sort of historical character, and an ethico-mystical one, which is perhaps the one which is the nearest in approach to western religious ideas. They originate in three entirely different

[1] It could be argued that in the Jewish doctrine the ' sins of the father shall be visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation ' the same ethical inconsistency exists. That is not quite the case. The Jewish doctrine is based on the belief in a kind of continued existence of the individual in the children and the children's children. The children and the children's children have a concrete and a spiritual inheritance from the forefathers, to which the Jewish doctrine adds a sort of moral responsibility. In Hinduism only the moral responsibility is hereditary.

realms of thought. The first is the belief that the soul can leave a body and penetrate into another body, that it can wander from body to body. That is a typical animistic belief of primitive tribes : that the soul can leave a body, especially in sleep or in death, but also in an ecstasy or as the result of magic. A wandering soul like this can penetrate into the body of another living being and change its individuality. In primitive tribes extensive ritual procedures are employed against both these processes There can hardly be a doubt that this element of the doctrine of transmigration of the soul is traceable to the original inhabitants of India, Dravidian tribes which, after the invasion of the Aryans, formed the lowest caste, the Shudras The mythology of the Aryan conquerors never assimilated this primitive animism, it scarcely affected it.

While Christianity converted the heathen animal-gods, the animistic demons and elemental spirits into pretty fairy-tale figures, degraded the terrible child-devouring Lilith or Astaroth into a pleasantly gruesome fairy-tale witch, debased the tree- and water-demon into a capricious and mysterious Melusine, caricatured Eros and Psyche in the figures of Lohengrin and Elsa in a semi-comic opera, and reduced Isis, seeking her brother—husband Osiris, to the dainty Goldelse in the household tales—in the Indian village, now just as 5,000 years ago, the ancient spirits of trees and water, the phallic demons of the field and the forest, animal totems and animal men continue to be worshipped under threadbare Hindu names. Lilith or Astaroth, under the Hindu name of Kali and a hundred other names, still receives her bloody offerings even in large cities like Bombay or Calcutta, and in remote jungle villages perhaps occasionally also a human sacrifice. In this way official Hinduism also took over into its doctrine of transmigration of the soul one of the principal animistic features—namely, the belief that the soul can wander from one body to another, from a human body to an animal body and vice versa, even into a plant or into a mineral (according to Jainism). That is the one element of the doctrine of transmigration of the soul. It undoubtedly originated with the aboriginal Dravidian inhabitants.

The second element in the doctrine is quite fundamentally different from the first. It is a kind of mythico-heroic genealogy. For a proper understanding of this it must first be observed that the doctrine of transmigration of the soul is grouped around one single mythological archetype and only, so to say, plays variations on it—namely, the doctrine of the 'avataras' or incarnations of the god Vishnu. All that we call transmigration of the soul and reincarnation appears to be modelled, in one way or another, on this mythological example. There are ten, or, according to the strictest orthodox teaching, twenty-two incarnations, each of which is of the greatest interest. The first is Vatsya, the fish The last three are the most popular, namely, Rama, the hero of the Ramayana ; Krishna, the god of the Bhagavad Gita ; and Buddha. They are specified in the Vishnu Puranas and the Bhagavad Puranas In another essay the present

author has analysed the metabiological significance which, in this transformation, leads, from a primordial cell resting upon the water, the sleeping Vishnu, to a fish, then to a toad, to a boar, a lion-man, a dwarf, a giant and to Rama, the most human of all heroes—this metabiological scheme which appears to underlie the ten incarnations or 'avataras' of Vishnu.[2] Here the geneaological idea of these 'avataras' must be discussed, for it is simultaneously a genealogical list, a catalogue of ancestors, a genealogical tree beyond the span of the historical epoch. 'Avatara' means nothing but 'the descendant', 'the successor'. This catalogue of ancestors is only one of the endless genealogical tables with which the Puranas—like the Old Testament—are filled. With a difference, however. While the Biblical genealogies advance the claim to a historical tradition, the genealogical tables of the Puranas are a peculiar mixture,—sometimes astrological, when the sun, the moon and Mercury appear as ancestors of the kings, as in the list of ancestors of the kings of the Chandra-Vansa and of the Surya-Vansa—sometimes mythological, like the genealogies of Greek heroes, when the ruling dynasties trace their descent from legendary heroes like Rama, as in Hellas and Rome from Hercules, who is somehow psychologically related to Rama. These two types of genealogies also have parallels among other peoples. The third kind of Puranic lists of ancestors, the 'Avataras' of the Bhagavat—Puranas and the Vishnu—Puranas, has no parallels in any other people. This line of ancestors did not arise through natural reproduction, but through the transmigration of souls, during a series of re-incarnations. Each of these heroes and gods has two kinds of ancestors, the physical ancestors and the ancestors in their soul-migration. And these two kinds of ancestors exist side by side not only in different orders of nature, but also in different orders of time, which meet and may even intersect each other, but are not parallel. Moreover, two or more 'avataras' or incarnations, which are ages apart in their own chronological order, may yet meet bodily on earth in the same historical or mythological space. For example: Parasu-Rama 'Rama with the axe', the Brahmanic giant, who overcomes the Kshatriyas, is the sixteenth incarnation of Vishnu (in the longer, orthodox sequence of 'avataras'). He belongs to a very ancient metabiological epoch. Rama-Chantra, the Rama of the 'Ramayana', quite a human hero, the most human hero in Indian mythology, undoubtedly belongs to the latest epoch. He is the eighteenth incarnation of Vishnu in the long list of the twenty-two incarnations, and thus lies two incarnations behind Parasu-Rama, which, in the traditional calculation of the time of the 'avataras' could represent some thousands of years. Both Ramas, however, Parasu-Rama and Rama-Chandra (or simply 'Rama') nevertheless belong to the same mythical or historical generation and meet each other bodily as foes in the two epics of the 'Mahabharata' and 'Ramayana'. Parasu-Rama, although an incarnation of Vishnu, is an adherent of

[2] 'Die neue Rundschau', October, 1946, Stockholm.

the opposite god Shiva. He fights with the hero Rama, who does not show proper respect to Shiva, and is conquered. The event is entirely outside logic, as the rebirth of a soul in the transmigration, the re-incarnation, can after all, logically take place, only after the death and departure of the preceding being. The only possible explanation is that the soul-transmigration takes place in a time-order which is totally different in kind from the natural, historical or mythological time-order.

Another example: the nineteenth incarnation is Bala-Rama in the genealogy of 'avataras' the immediate ancestor, so to say, the father of Krishna, but in the mythological genealogy the elder brother of Krishna, who is the twentieth 'avatara', the dark principal god of India beside Shiva. Bala-Rama is the—not always reliable—comrade in battle of his brother Krishna and appears in the Mahabharata as the teacher of warfare of that Prince Arjuna whose spiritual leader and charioteer is the god Kṛishna in the immortal portion of the Mahabharata—the Bhagavad Gita. To sum up once more: that, in the transmigration of souls consecutive or widely separated incarnations, the younger of which cannot possibly be born before the older one has died, can yet meet in space as foes or as brothers, proves that the transmigration of souls belongs to an entirely different order of space and time from what our customary one—and also the mythological one—is, that here time and space stand in a different relationship to each other from that of everyday. It will be good to adhere to this formula. This play of an imaginary time with an imaginary space will still often be met with by the reader of this investigation.

We will not assert that this intersection of genealogical sequences of different kinds is completely foreign to western doctrinal theologies. In the Evangelists, for example, the ancestors of Jesus are traced back to the kings Solomon and David, to Ruth and the patriarchs, although Jesus is not at all the son of his father Joseph, but begotten by the Holy Ghost, that is, a direct incarnation of God the Father. But this crossing of genealogies—presumably arisen under Indian influence—plays no other part in the religious life of the west, than that of incidentally giving so-called Bible scholars occasion for jokes, while, for Indian life, it is of tremendous importance. This appears to be a very abstract statement; in reality it is the most concrete that can be made about the life of the Indian. The time-calculation of the 'avataras' intersects the historical one not only in the Puranas and in the epics, but every day and every minute of the everyday life of the Indian. The classical Indian only lives with a part of his being in the historical period and in reality defended and preserved himself against the hundredfold inundations by foreign conquerors in his history only by suspending the historical period and the historical process in himself entirely and ever and again retreating into the unhistorical time-order of the 'avataras'. What influence this crossing of the computations of time, this naïve blending

of imaginary dimensions of time and space, had upon art is still to be demonstrated. The inner life of India is always in a sort of state of suspension between ahistorical and historical relations which are both mixed and linked together somehow in the doctine of transmigration of the soul, and without much effort and almost unnoticed it changes from the ahistorical order of time to the historical one and vice versa, just as both exist side by side in Hindu art.

To which social class this genealogical, so to say, historical element in the doctrine of transmigration of the soul obviously owes its origin we have already indicated. It cannot have been created by the ahistorical animistic original inhabitants, but by a class with a historical sense, which demands genealogies, chronicles and chroniclers, however fantastic the former may be, that is, by a class of warriors and rulers. Only rulers and warriors, who form the dynasties are vitally interested in genealogies—historical or mythical.[3] There is no room for doubt that this genealogical element in the doctrine of transmigration originated with a warrior caste, the Aryan caste of Kshatriyas, the second caste. And here it should at once be added that the third element in the doctrine, the ethical—or apparently ethical one—that the soul, in its migration from body to body, atones for past sins and is rewarded for past meritorious actions, and the mystical element, that the purpose of this migration and atonement of ten thousand years is the ultimate mystical union or reunion of the individual soul with the universal soul, Brahma, from which this soul became separated in primeval times, can have been created by no other than a priestly caste, the Brahmans. Thus we see that in this apparently so simple structure of the doctrine of transmigration of the soul three strata are superimposed upon each other, through which all the three main castes or ' varnas ' are represented—namely, the Aryan Brahmans or priests, the Aryan Kshatriyas or warrior kings, and the Shudras, the Dravidian aborigines. The idealogical classification which resulted therefrom, but later fell into disuse is remarkable. The ' historical ' Aryan peoples forced a kind of conception of history, a genealogical idea, upon the ' ahistorical ' aborigines, but the latter adapted the historical-genealogical idea imposed upon them for themselves and reconverted it to an a-historical ' transmigration of souls ' within their own unhistoric world with their unhistoric dimensions of space and time. The two worlds, the historic and the ahistoric, can intersect each other, but can never be absorbed into each other.

The doctrine of transmigration of souls is thus the product of a struggle between the three main castes or ' varnas '. That these three fundamental castes, the Brahmans, the Kshatriyas and the Shudras actually fought with each other, probably during centuries,

[3] On the castes of the ' Bards, genealogists and musicians ' see Omar R. Ehrenfels : *Mother-Right in India*, Hyderabad, Deccan, 1941. According to Ehrenfels they stood in relation principally to the Rajput warrior castes.

has been proved historically and, which is perhaps even more important in India, mythologically. The figure of Parasu-Rama, 'Rama with the axe', the Brahmanic giant who punished the impudence of the Kshatriyas and subjugated them to the Brahmans, indicates long and bloody struggles between the castes of priests and warriors, in which the priests asserted a kind of supremacy and established themselves officially as the highest caste. The Mahabharate says of Parasu-Rama: 'He cleansed the earth three times seven times of the Kshatriya caste and filled with their blood the five great seas of Samanta-Panchaka' Then he surrendered the government of the earth to the Brahman and retired as a penitent to the Mahendra Hills. As regards the Shudras, the lowest caste, it must be said that the entire thousands-of-years-old development of the caste system, the creation of the national epic of the 'Ramayana' and of certain highly characteristic episodes in the 'Mahabharata', the classical laws of Manu (which Nietzsche declared to be the greatest book of world-literature) are nothing but ideological weapons in the fight against the aborigines, and instruments for their suppression by the two high Aryan main castes, the Brahmans and Kshatriyas.

In this long struggle, lasting hundreds of years, no one was victorious, and the Dravidians were certainly never really conquered. 'The conflict of the Dravidian ideas of the South and the Indo-Aryan ideas of the North, which has lasted for three thousand years more or less, still continues, although on the surface the victory of the North seems to be complete', says Vincent A. Smith in the *Oxford History of India*. The Brahmans have maintained their nominal supremacy, but they have had to give up their entire sacrificial cult and almost all their gods. The old Aryan gods, Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Agni are still invoked in the ritual chants—but they have hardly any temples, and no more worshippers. They have been almost entirely supplanted by other, popular, semi-totemistic animal gods, by Hanuman the monkey god, Ganesha the elephant god—the two real favourites of the present-day Hindu—by the dreaded bloodthirsty Kali, but above all by Krishna and Shiva, the two in essentials, distinctly Dravidian principal gods of the present Indian Olympus.

Already in the two great epics the old Aryan gods appear almost only as ageing, helpless, destitute phantom gods in order to contribute to the glory of Vishnu or Shiva. The holy land of the ancient Aryans,[4] the Indus Valley extolled over and over again in the oldest Aryan Vedas, became a cursed region, into which no pious Hindu cares to set foot. The old Aryan word for the dark original inhabitants, Krishna, 'the Black One'—'50,000 Krishnas were slaughtered and

[4] The Indian conception of 'Aryans' has nothing to do with race. During the course of centuries Brahmans and Kshatriyas, the 'Aryan' castes took girls from the aborigines to wife and that also the marriage of the daughter of a Brahman with a Shudra was possible in exceptional cases—even though causing severe conflict—is proved by the acutely anti-Brahman legend of the tragic marriage of Shiva with Sati, the daughter of the Brahman Daksha, and the suicide of Sati.

their pregnant wives were killed, so that they should not propagate themselves ' (—these are the triumphant passages in a Vedic Hymn—) became exalted into the name of the highest Indian national god. And, not the Brahmans but the Kshatriyas produced the truly highest god of Asia—a man who never wanted to be a god—namely, Gautama Buddha, the enemy of the Brahmans and of the old caste system, who destroyed for ever the old Vedic sacrificial cults. For this he was incorporated in the genealogy of the incarnations of Vishnu as the last historical ' avatara ' of the god Vishnu, as the saint who came to entice the wicked by his contempt of caste and his atheism and separate them in this way from the pious, as it were as the Mephistophelian god of heretics ' who always desires evil and always achieves good '. And this embarrassing and rather uncanny companionship of Buddha as god with the Hindu gods is the only remnant of Buddhism left in India, the land of its origin.

However, it is just this embarrassing, uncanny, undissolved companionship of contrasts, this pluralism, which is so exceedingly characteristic of this land in which struggles continued for thousands of years and yet there were neither vanquisher nor vanquished, in which all the great antinomies of mankind lie, as mystical and historical stratifications, so uncomfortably side by side and on top of each other and promiscuously and yet create no productive third, but only petrify and stagnate and are eternal in this country only because they are fossilized. They are the same petrified and irreconcilable contra dictions of which the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, as we have analysed it here, is the faithful reflection, in which all the three basic castes are represented with their essentials and which is yet no synthesis, but only a contradictory self-dissolving image, which, by its numbness, causes all life, all development to become numbed. On the other hand, this is the reason why India remained India and never became a Persian, or Afghan, or Chinese province although it was again and again thrown into ' subjection ' by every neighbouring people that chose to do so (also, as we know, by some more distant ones too).

The truth is that the mystical element in the migration of souls breaks up the ethical element, and that the ethical breaks itself up again. If the individual is really only a delusion, an error, a sin, the evil illusion of the splintering off from the universal spirit, it is difficult to conceive an individual, concrete sin within this general sinful illusion. Who is it who sins if the individual is only an illusion ? And what other sin exists than this illusion itself—the illusion of the separation of the individual from the universal spirit, and the illusions of desire and possession, which foster these illusions ? In fact there really is no other. In the epics, above all in the Mahabharata, deception and crimes of every kind are committed ; they are even invented and recommended by the gods, especially by Krishna, the principal god himself—but no penance is necessary—the heroes enter heaven or Kaïlasa without a stain Great mythical yogis in hundreds of

Indian legends, in all the great epics and dramas, employ the magical power which they have gained through penance for the most audacious outbursts of arrogance, passion and vengeance—their souls in no way have to do penance for it. They have to atone only for technical faults in the practice of this asceticism—to atone with the heaviest loss of power and with the prolongation of the period of penance by thousands of years. To have robbed innocent children like little Sakuntala of their life's happiness through anger and revenge is not in the least an obstacle to the constant ascent of the yogi's soul to Brahma—at least we learn nothing of it in the legends, epics and dramas. The yogis can punish arbitrarily, without investigation, and their curse is so powerful that no god can lift it. All that is, so to speak, in perfect order in the mystical ethics of transmigration of souls. But, if they allow their meditation to be interrupted, even for a fraction of a second by a beautiful female demon their power is annihilated for ten thousand years. The attentive reader of the epics will be amazed at how malicious and thoroughly vile these great mythical yogis are. They are never anything like saints. They are always only brutal, revengeful, unaccountable men of power, who, by means of tremendous ascetic practices, have defiantly forced out their magical power from the gods, and not infrequently direct this power against the gods. Their individuality, which is after all only ' an illusion ', and which, through penances, they purposely desire to confirm as mere illusion, flourishes with such rank exuberance that it threatens the security of the world. The gods can defend themselves against it only by trickery. Moreover the actual god of asceticism, the great Shiva, is passionate, unaccountably revengeful and entirely blind in his murderous fury. The asceticism of the mythical and legendary yogis appears, first and last, to serve only for the attainment of power—an attainment of brutal, magical power which can be used entirely as the yogi wishes. The release of the individual soul in the universal soul seems to be only a very distant secondary object. It is absolutely the animistic magician, the omnipotent medicine-man of a primitive tribe who here breaks through the Brahmanical idea of the saint, of the ascetic self-release of the individual, and destroys this idea : Once again it is this curious plurality which permeates the entire doctrine of the transmigration of souls and Hinduism altogether.

The true highest god of India, to whom all the gods without exception are subordinate, even Brahma, the Universal Soul, is in fact no person. He is a kind of mechanical scale on which the faults and the merits of the thousands of lives of millions of souls are weighed, and which maintains the balance of justice in the world. Here there is no mercy, no appeal, no personal god. This scale is unrelenting simply because it is mechanical and functions automatically. But this scale which weighs all life is itself so abstract and lifeless that it hardly signifies a living force in everyday life. The Hindu has an uncertainty which weighs relatively little—namely, what he

will be when He is no longer He, but quite a different being, an animal or another person, that knows as little about him as he knows about his past lives. This doubt does not weigh very much. But he has a certainty that weighs very heavy, namely, that he will not have to expiate his misdeeds as long as He is He himself. Only in the enormous periods of time of thousands and tens of thousands of years in which the lives of the legendary yogis are lived, do actions or omissions have consequences—just as, in modern physical mathematics, there are natural laws which only apply to tremendous measurements of time and space. Guilt and expiation is no law of nature in the average measurement of Indian everyday life and the ordinary Indian person. He knows that he will not expiate so long as He is He himself, but only, when he is another and lives another life. His life is lived on two different planes of time: on a historical and causal one, on which causes have effects—but this one is dead and abstract—, and on an unhistorical and a-causal time-plane, on which causes have *no* effects, because the continuity between cause and effect is broken by the destruction of the individual. However, this dualism of the orders of time also interrupts the continuity of everyday life. An Indian day is connected with the following day and the preceding day quite differently, much more loosely than a European one. Cause and effect, also in everyday life, are far more mere statistical possibilities than a binding physical basic law. The individual is far more the merely imagining clearing-house for unconnected impressions and reflexes than a concrete force of resistance and willingness, of acquiescence and denial. Everywhere the Other World intervenes with a different time-reckoning and a different ethical law of nature. Again and again the causality of this life becomes only a doubtful hypothesis before quite a different abstract causality.

The Hindu is not a fatalist—certainly not in the sense in which the Mohammedan is one. Kismet and Karma are diametrically opposite. He hears a voice—but it is too far away, too indirect, too inarticulate. He cannot understand it. His actions have no real consequences in this life, or in this world, or in this time. What seems to be a consequence in life is a mere accident. Only the accidents of his life are conditioned causally—and, moreover, by an unconditional and unbroken causality. But he does not know this causality. His individuality, his destiny, are not completed in this life. They are another individuality, another destiny, which continue his. It is for this reason also that, in Indian literature, there can be no drama in the sense in which we understand the word, in the sense of those of Sophocles or Euripides or Shakespeare. Life is rather comparable to a story published in a newspaper in instalments—but no one really knows how these instalments are connected. His ego does not confront a God who knows better than he what is to become of him. He has no reason to assume that sorrow and suffering that befall him have any kind of higher significance in his life, in his ego; they

certainly have a meaning, but one which is absolutely outside his ego and his life. He is the accused in a lawsuit in which he is judged, not for his deeds and his failures, but for those of another. This lawsuit, in which he is the accused, has no meaning for him, nor can it have any meaning for him. If he tries to instil a meaning into it, then it is an error, and must be an error. Here every reader will presumably think of the books of Franz Kafka *The Trial*, *The Castle*, *The Great Wall of China*, and the story 'The Penal Colony' How far Kafka was unconsciously influenced by Indian views the present author cannot say; but he knows from personal experience that Kafka knew no more about India than any other man of more than average culture. To his knowledge Kafka never spoke of Indian philosophy with particular interest, certainly not with such interest as, say, of Kierkegaard or Pascal.

In India the god is, at all events, not so far removed from man as in the dialectical theology of Kierkegaard. Every person might have been a god once or could become a god in a later life. His son could be a god, his father could have been a god Every human being is a potential god. He may become a god some day. To be a god, however, does not mean so much. Even gods cannot live for ever in Kaïlasa, on Olympus When the force of their good' deeds in all their incarnations of earthly life is exhausted, they have to descend again and become men and assume the burden of new deeds and new sufferings. In this double-entry book-keeping there can be no mistakes and no exceptions But on what principles these books are kept is entirely uncertain. Only one thing is certain—namely, that one may not kill so much as a single fly, or vermin, or a rat, or a frog, nor even a snake. Much else is uncertain. It is uncertain whether it is good or bad to give aid to a horse that is perishing with a broken leg by the wayside, for it has to expiate, surely not its own bad deeds, but some bad deeds or other which were once committed somewhere.

It is certain only that it is a serious crime to shorten the sufferings of the animal by means of a bullet. 'Ahimsa', the precept of non-violence, which governs the entire Hinduism (and Jainism even more radically), is often misunderstood. It is no precept of love or pity. It is only the prohibition of interrupting life by active intervention and thereby putting a spoke in the wheel of the karma, this clock-work of guilt and expiation. It does not prohibit the torturing of a cow to make it give more milk (which is a fairly general practice in villages although the cow is the most sacred animal of the Hindus), neither does it forbid leaving her to slow starvation when she no longer gives milk. The strange coldness, abstractness and unfeelingness of the Indian moral philosophy shows itself here too. It is uncertain whether it is positively good to render assistance to one's fellow-man in misfortune, or whether it would not perhaps be better to scorn him—for after all he has to atone, and must atone, for the guilt of another, and contempt is perhaps only a part of the penance which shortens the path. If the Saviour is a being that takes the guilt of

others upon himself—' Ecce Agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi '—so in Hinduism everyone is, so to say, compulsorily everyone's saviour. It has been said that the postulates of Christianity are too lofty for the average man. The postulate that Hinduism expects of the average man is almost that of being Christ himself. This demand conveys nothing to the average man. It gives him no indication for everyday life.

Let us consider the juristic consequences. To be condemned in the court for a misdeed is no penance. It gives no sort of moral satisfaction to the sentenced person or to the world around him—viewed subjectively it is an unfortunate accident, something that one would feel inclined to call ' hard luck '. For, above this law-suit another one proceeds, in which judgment is passed according to another law, and the penalty in an earthly law-suit only quite occasionally has any connection with the crime or offence for which it has been imposed by an earthly court of law. In reality—in mythological reality—it applies to quite a different offence committed by quite a different being. Open corruption—the most brazen and shameless to be found in any country on the face of the earth, is, so to speak, quasi-official and legalized through the classical literature. In the Arthashastra, a text of the third century B.C. it says : ' As it is impossible not to taste honey on the tip of the tongue, so it is impossible for the officials of the king not to eat up at least a little of the king's revenues '.

This is the place to speak also of the Indian passion for games of chance, betting, gambling and for speculation—passions for which there is, so to speak, mythical, epic, legendary and almost religious evidence. The Mahabharata, the Indian national epic, has a game of dice as the principal motif of its action. In the game of dice the Pandavas lose their fortune, their kingdom and finally their common wife, the princess Draupadi. As a later consequence of this game ten thousand human lives are lost in a war, comprising almost the whole of the civilized world known to the mythical Indian. In many other parts of the Mahabharata the passion for gambling is the motif, for example in the peculiarly touching and at the same time burlesque legend of Nala and Damayanti which moved Richard Wagner so deeply—the story of a good brave, faithful husband who, however, is possessed by the passion of gambling. It is surely the only legend in world-literature in which even that which in Monte Carlo is called a system ' is mythologized, that is the attempt, by means of some prescription or formula, to control the dice or the card in the game of chance, the ball in roulette, to impose a rule on the accidents of the hazard.[5] King Rituparna is ' informed in the rules of the chances of the game ' and gives his formula to Nala, who, by its means, wins back his fortune and his wife Damayanti. But already in the Rigveda, the oldest Veda, the gambler laments : My wife repulses me, my

[5] Pushkin's demoniacal Pique-Dame (Queen of spades) could be taken as a second example.

mother hates me : the gambler is not pitied in his sorrows. He is treated no better than a valuable horse that has become old and useless '.

Here the doctrine of transmigration of the soul has exerted a manifold and greatly contradictory influence. It makes the Indian peasant into one of the most industrious and at the same time one of the most retrogressive in the world. He drudges because life means labour and suffering. Even today he still cultivates the soil by the methods of two thousand years ago because he is not convinced or obsessed by earthly objects. Whether he will reap enough out of his field to feed himself and his family does not depend on his labour, not even upon the god whose phallic symbol stands at the border of his field. It depends upon the sins and merits of the beings in whom his soul dwelled previously. The same resignation which makes him into the most diligent of labourers makes the more sceptical town-dweller into a gambler and speculator. The faith of the Biblical Jew or of the Puritan, that God rewards piety, steadiness, honest labour already here below with prosperity, as He rewarded the Biblical patriarchs —that faith he is lacking entirely.

That any deed will be rewarded in this life he will consider very unlikely. It does not accord properly with the doctrine of transmigration of the soul. It is also opposed to his attitude towards life : if something happens to him, good or bad, he will never instinctively and spontaneously trace it back to a cause in this life, but first of all regard it as something of an origin unknown to him, that has to be borne. So it is natural to him to leave prosperity and loss, good fortune and misfortune to chance in a gambling game. There is, so to speak, more trust in God in it—more faith in Karma. In every alley of the Indian bazaar gambling and betting goes on day and night. The street-sweeper bets with the beggar ; the man-servant with the cook, the door-keeper with the newspaper boy, that the prices of cotton will rise or fall, in two days, or a week, or a year. They bet a penny, a shilling or fifty pounds. They have never been interested in the cotton trade, they possess no expert knowledge of any sort, their opinion is based on no experience of any kind—but they speculate in cotton. They play cards on the street pavement, they throw the dice, they gamble with matches, they put money on horses. They do it in imitation of their heroes in the sacred epics as well as they can. And, on the day of the festival of the goddess Mahalakshmi, one of the symbolic requirements of the cult, to be placed before the image of the goddess and worshipped in the religious ceremony, is a silver rupee. European and American capitalists are not so honest. It is almost refreshing.

Where the connections between causes and effects, action and experience, are so incidental, that, which we call ' experience of life ' is probably also quoted at only a rather low rate. The Indian will never rely on his experience of life—always on horoscopes, talismans, on the ' auspicious day '. The ' auspicious day ' is the

true god of large Indian cities and provincial towns. This it is which, out of the entire Hinduism, remains, when the gods and temples lose their authority in the eyes of the enlightened Hindu. To discover and declare the 'auspicious day' is what feeds the priest when sacrificial gifts become more scanty from year to year. No father will settle the marriage of his son or daughter, no merchant, no magnate of the stock exchange, no government official will undertake a risk, assume responsibility, without having consulted the astrologer —that is the Brahmin—regarding the 'auspicious day'. Advertisements of the most abstruse astrological publications, talismans and miraculous medicines fill whole pages of the most esteemed daily newspapers. One orders, and pays three pounds sterling for a table in which the rise and fall of the prices of cotton are foretold for one month; thirty pounds sterling for a publication giving the prices in advance, day by day, for a whole year. Two pounds is the price of a talisman which secures promotion and increase in salary for a subordinate employee in a bank or in an insurance office; five pounds for a police official; twelve pounds—at reduced prices!—for an Army officer. But if anybody was aiming at the rank of general or the high administrative posts in the I.C.S., the Indian Civil Service, he cannot escape without paying fifty pounds if he wants to obtain the correct, infallible and only reliable stone—all of them, moreover, blessed by priest and guaranteed. There is also a talisman serving a rather more intimate purpose, which costs still more.

This is, so to speak, the reflection cast by the doctrine of transmigration of the soul on the daily life of the Indian. Where there is no real confidence in experience of life, because all the known relations of life are really only accidental, and the true relations eternally undiscoverable, the more abstruse relationships are quite obviously the more reliable. They at least have, for themselves, the authority that corresponds to their irrationality. They are not products of natural causality which, applied to life, is false in every case and must be false, because life is not governed by this earthly causality but by a causality from beyond. Of course, millions of Indians belonging to large cities believe as little in the transmigration of souls as millions of Europeans of the big cities believe in punishment and reward in the next world. Nevertheless it has shaped their character, their world. Also that of the enlightened Indians: that the illness of a child in the house might be caused by the spirit of a woman who died in childbirth in this house years ago will hardly be doubted even by the educated Hindu doctor; and if he doubts it he will wisely keep his doubts to himself. Whether one can maintain a connection—with a personal friend, or with a business friend—will only be ascertained when one knows whether this man brings good luck or bad luck, and one will regulate one's behaviour to him according to this.

It will obviously not always be easy to make contacts and do business in this country. A promise and its fulfilment are two different things; the one does not stipulate the other. Time does not

run in such a straight line here as we expect, and the forgetting of such accidental associations as promise and fulfilment is surely no crime in the case of an individual whose tragedy consists of just the fact that he cannot remember what was ' before ' What this individual possesses absolutely, what no Hindu belief and no Hindu philosophy can take from him, is the present, the moment, the joy, the friendship, the flaming love of the moment. And in this the Indian is wonderful, wonderful in the spontaneity of the moment—so wonderful that one sometimes asks oneself whether that is not worth much more than our tedious western reliability and unreliability, faithfulness and unfaithfulness, loyalty and disloyalty. He is always ready to give himself up entirely to the moment. What remains of it to-morrow is another matter. He who does not know that will never understand the Indian, his lovable and wonderful spontaneity of feeling, his often regrettable unreliability. That the Indian certainly feels the inconsistency of the individual is proved by the following observation: the 'Enlightened One' has a kind of continuous individuality, which persists through all the incarnations. The Buddha knows about his former incarnations, which are related in the Yatakas. All of them, back into the earliest primeval times, are illuminated by the light of his existence as a Buddha and from one single great biographical unity, whether he happened to be a hare, an elephant or a human Boddhisatva, a ' not-yet-enlightened Buddha '. Also in the avatar-series of the incarnations of Vishnu a certain psychological sequence can be recognized. Vishnu is the preserver-god, who resists change—a conservative power, in metaphysical as well as in political respects. This conservative principle is already symbolized in the sleeping Vishnu before the creation of the world. This conservative principle recurs in several incarnations, for example, in the incarnation as the mythical giant Parasu-Rama, ' Rama with the axe ', who suppresses the revolts of the Kshatriyas with great bloodshed and restores the old, original Brahmanical world-order It appears again in the last, purely earthly incarnation of Vishnu, in Rama, the hero of the Ramayana, the favourite of every devout Hindu. He is a conservative hero, conservative to the extent of absurdity and of cruelty like his prodigious mythical forefather. He repudiates Sita, his faithful wife, who shared with him all the hardships of his exile, because she was stolen by the powerful demon Ravana and detained for some time in his palace in Lanka (Ceylon). Rama is just as convinced of Sita's purity and inviolability as every reader of the Ramayana. He is no Othello. But the law of world-order, the divinely-ordained caste system, commands it. Ravana belongs to a different caste, moreover perhaps to a slightly higher one than Rama, for Ravana is a Brahmin while Rama is presumably only a Kshatriya, and as far as Ravana's nobility, magical power and mythical rank are concerned, they are proved by the fact that Ravana possessed ' ten heads, twenty arms, copper-coloured eyes and teeth that gleam like the young moon Moreover after he was conquered

and slain by Rama, the latter ordered the funeral rites of Ravana and all his wives as befitting a Brahmin, to be performed with proper ceremony and solemnity. But the fact remained that he was a member of another caste, and the law of caste requires that a wife who has lived for some time in the house of a man of different caste should be ' out-caste '. Rama hesitates for a while. But then he abandons Sita, for whose return he has fought for years, together with her sons, who are his own—because, so say Rama's friends : what would become of the entire world-order if the higher castes were to set such a bad example to the lower castes and not to observe the law of caste? The Shudras would become undisciplined and the whole world-system would collapse. And so Sita, the model of wifely fidelity and chastity for every Indian woman, dies after living in seclusion with only her sons as companions. The merciless conservative spirit of Vishnu persisted through twenty incarnations.

But this continuity of the type through all the generations of avataras is a privilege of the great, like Rama and the Buddha. There is no mention of it in the life of the ordinary man. His individuality perishes and at every incarnation an entirely different individuality is born, which nevertheless has to atone for all the preceding incarnations. And the only possible logical escape from this contradiction of its moral continuity and psychological non-continuity is the one which the doctrine has made use of—namely, that of declaring the individual to be nothing but an illusion, an obstinate error on the part of mankind, which has to be made amends for in practice and through practice. The instability of the individual in primitive animism is here once again combined with the most highly developed spiritual mysticism of the Brahmin—the mystical reunion of the individual soul with Brahma, the universal soul. And out of all the possible ethical, social and moral transgressions this hybrid solution leaves to the ordinary human being really only one—namely, transgression against this knowledge itself, against the knowledge of the illusion of the individual soul—and only one real merit—namely, the practice of reunion with the universal soul. When and by what means this final goal is reached is a profound riddle. Krishna, the charioteer of Arjuna, reveals himself in the Gita as the Universal God and Universal Spirit himself. He utters those words which have become the creed of every Hindu and the actual foundation of mystical Hinduism : ' The Song of the Divine ', the ' Gita Surely no deed, human or divine is comparable with this deed, and one would think that after it this god of all gods would reach the highest goal for ever, that he would merge in the universal spirit. However, his soul does not find rest. He re-incarnates himself again and again, not only as Rama, in order to accomplish the comparatively inferior task of the annihilation of a demon, but also as the great heretic, Buddha. In the age of the bloodthirsty Kali, in our own age, he will re-incarnate himself once more : as Kalkin, the white horse, the Messiah, who will destroy the wicked. After that the world will

perish, an epoch of Brahma will have come to an end, and Vishnu will again lie dreaming on the primeval waters, supported by the serpent Sesha. And then, the cycle of the worlds will start again from the first beginning.

II

It has already been stated here that Krishna, with his earlier and later incarnations of the Vishnu-series is only the *one* principal god of Hinduism. The other is Shiva, a dangerous and magnificent god—the god of destruction and re-birth, violent, whimsical, blood-thirsty—but also the Yogi above all Yogis, the Maha-Yogi, the penitent above all penitents, having such magical power of concentration and asceticism that no god or man can resist this force. That he belongs to a lower Dravidian caste can hardly be doubted.[6] He dwells in grave-yards among corpses and unclean animals, girds himself with animals' skins and decorates himself with the skulls of the enemies he has killed and whose blood he has drunk. On one occasion he marries the daughter of a Brahmin, but is so deeply insulted by her father that the girl kills herself. Filled with despair Shiva impales the corpse of his wife on his trident and, with the trident held on high, commences the frenzied dance of despair which causes the world to tremble in its foundations. Gods and men grow pale with terror. In the greatest distress Vishnu hastens to the spot in order to save the world. He cuts the limbs of the dead woman off one by one from the trident and these, hurled away by the frenzied dance, fly into all the corners of the world. The spots on which they ultimately fall will later be holy places of pilgrimage. Shiva, however, calms down again after the corpse vanishes from the trident, and the world lives on. That is Shiva, the dancing god, the lord of the worlds.[7]

What is most striking in the myth of Shiva—or ought to be most striking for the present author has never found it mentioned anywhere yet—is that he is not subject to the law of re-birth as his opposite god Krishna is. It is not that he thereby became less unequivocal than his counterpart. What is happening there in some mythical dimension of time or other, is present here simultaneously side by side in a mythical dimension of space. What the avatara of Vishnu are, the 'aspects', the 'avarthas' or 'rudras' of the god Shiva are. He is Rudra the annihilator, Sankara the restorer, he is the physician above all physicians and the tutelary god of cattle, he is the Maha-Yogi, the great ascetic, but he is also the dancer,

[6] Sir John Marshall assumes, on the basis of the excavations at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, that the Shiva-Parvati cult belongs to the oldest Dravidian culture of India, the so-called 'Indus Civilisation' and has spread from Northern India, under various names, to the Near East, Punic North Africa, Egypt and Greece.

[7] Indian legends are reproduced here in the original form, as they are told to the child by the Indian mother,—not in the ridiculous bowdlerized versions of some of the English editions.

the hunter, the 'sweet-smelling one' who dwells in graves, he is lingam, the male organ of generation, the embodiment of sex, he is the drinker of blood, he is Mahadeo or, as Goethe writes: 'Mahadö, der Herr der Erde'. Altogether he has one thousand and eight names and almost as many 'aspects'. But that is not enough. His theological range includes also the doctrine of the Shaktis, with the strangest of all Hindu cults. Shaktis are first of all only the divine wives (not the concubines) of the gods, of all the gods, not only of Shiva. But in its full ideological development the doctrine of the shaktis really belongs only to Shivaite theology. In Hindu symbolism the shaktis signify the chthonic creative power of the gods. In Hindu scholasticism they mean almost exactly what Catholic scholasticism calls 'materia', namely, that which gives to the divine spark, the 'forma' or idea earthly reality and earthly existence. In the myth the shaktis are simply women, good and bad ones, divine and demoniacal ones, belligerent, peaceable, sex-obsessed or virtuous ones. Moreover, the list of his shaktis, in its numerous forms of existence is as full of contradictions as the figure of Shiva himself. There is Uma 'the light', Parvati, the mountain-goddess of the Himalayas, 'Himalaya-ki beti', the mother of the world, who is worshipped with intoxicating beverages and sexual acts. With Parvati commences the list of the grim chthonic shaktis, sisters of the Babylonian Astaroth and the Jewish Lilith, devourers of children, vampires, and of the 'Tantras'. Their thirst has to be quenched with blood—above all, Kali, the black blood-thirsty one, who stretches out her tongue dripping with blood and tramples on bleeding giants girded with serpents and human heads, the founder and patron goddess of Calcutta. It is she who will one day trample down also her consort Shiva and destroy the world. There is Durga, the cruel, beautiful, yellow woman, riding on an elephant. But there is also Kanya 'the virgin', Kotari 'the naked one', Sakam-Bari 'the nourisher of plants', Sati the goddess of conjugal fidelity, who follows her husband into the death by fire, and Aparna 'the ascetic', who shares in Shiva's terrible ascetic exercises, and thousands of others, have been worshipped with bloody cults since primitive times. All of them are, in some uncertain way, individuals with individual forms. Yet they are only aspects of a single feminine goddess, maternal and maenadic, life-giving and blood-thirsty, mother, demon and mistress of the temple orgies. Even more: all of them belong to an order of existence which an European would scarcely designate as existence. For again they are only aspects of Shiva. Shiva himself is bi-sexual, he is man and woman, he embraces the existence of Parvati in all her aspects within his own existence. In his right ear he wears a feminine ornament, and in his left ear a man's ear-ring as symbol of his bi-sexuality.[8] That which unfolds itself in time in the 'avataras' of Vishnu, here develops in space, and these space-dimensions, in which

[8] See Bronze, reproduced in E. B. Havell's, *The Ideals of Indian Art*, pages 78 and 80.

thousands of contradictory individuals are identical with one single individual, are as little ours, which we call ' real ' (or also those of Roman or Greek mythology) as the time-dimensions in which the incarnations of the avataras occur. And yet—we must add straightaway—they are present as concretely in Indian everyday life, in every minute and second of Indian life as those ' avataras ', and form the contradictory Indian character as the latter ones do or are formed by it : this character, to which the killing of a fly and, in orthodox Jainism, the plucking of a plant, the destruction of a living cell, the slightest interference with creative Nature is the greatest sin and which, nevertheless, in a true Shivaite blood-orgy, can inflict the martyrdom of death upon thousands of people.

How concrete these imaginary dimensions of space really are to the Indian is proved by a very popular religious picture which can be bought in every Indian bazaar for a few annas. It shows Shiva in all his finery dancing as a youthful god before Parvati. Simultaneously, however, he writhes at her feet as a bearded, exhausted, ash-besmeared yogi. The analogy with Parasu-Rama and Bala-Rama immediately strikes the eye. Corresponding with the paradox that several incarnations of a sequence of soul-transmigrations can coincide at the same concrete time, is the other paradox here that two aspects of one single god can dwell together as two figures in one space.

This Shivaite identity of oneness and plurality has also, as we shall see, had an influence on Indian art. Here only one single consideration may be anticipated. If the complicacy of a contradictory god can be represented in a picture in such a way that his contradictory ' aspects ' exist as two or more persons side by side bodily and pictorially, or if these psychological contradictions can be represented by means of several heads and many arms with allegorical symbols—then an art of portraiture is not possible. Indeed there probably are no portraits belonging to classical India—with the exception of the miniatures. But the miniatures are not originally Hindu. The devotional pictures have absolutely vacant faces. Many-headedness is a somewhat primitive psychological scale of degrees: Shiva has five faces ; Ravana, who is a still much more complicated character, has ten. In this country an art of individual portraiture cannot arise. On the contrary, the art of this country reached its zenith in the repetition of sameness, as in the Trimurti at Elephanta and in the Buddhist caves at Ellora with their identical row of dreaming Buddhas. These are the most magnificent achievements which Indian art has ever accomplished.

Now if we inquire into the cause of the remarkable circumstance that Shivaite theology does not know of incarnations like Vaishnavite theology, that transmigration of the soul does not appear to exist for it, a simple philosophical explanation offers itself first of all. It is this : Shiva, the god of death and of rebirth, who represents change in Nature, cannot himself be subject to the changes of time, for he

himself is death and re-birth ; Vishnu, who represents that which is permanent, is subject, in his material form, to the variations in time and Nature. Indeed, one of the many names of Shiva is ' Kala ', time, or ' Maha-Kala ', the great time, the lord of time. ' Nothing is constant but change ', said Börne in his famous speech at the death of Jean Paul. Thus Shiva is constant. This explanation is simple, attractive and plausible and cannot, therefore, be correct. Indian mythology is not so simple. The explanation would only apply to one single time-order—namely, our realistic one—and is, therefore, no explanation. In the Vedas it is said of ' Kala ', time, that ' being the father of the worlds, he became their son '. This exceedingly difficult passage can only be interpreted at all if a plurality of time-orders, time-dimensions or time-qualities is assumed. ' Time ' (Shiva) is the father, but also the son, of the worlds. Within this paradox of poly-dimensional time a paradox like the one by Börne indicated above would no longer be a paradox. Even though the father of the worlds cannot be subject to change in time, the son will, nevertheless, be subject to it. Quite logically this designation of ' Kala ' or ' Maha-Kala ' is applied not only to Shiva himself, but also to his servant Isa-sakhi, the lord of the Ganas, who, of course, is again only another aspect of Shiva himself.

The only real explanation again lies in tracing it back to the original animistic principle. The instability of the primitive individual appears in two different forms—first, active and transitive, in that the soul can wander from one individual to another, even from a human being to an animal, to a plant, to a mineral. Secondly, passive and reflexive, in that the individuality of the primitive person is itself transformable, through the intrusion of demons or strange souls or through ecstasy—involuntary or voluntary—, as for example, in totemism, when the ecstatic devotee himself becomes the totem-animal.

Now, if the Vaishnavite soul-transmigration and incarnation obviously arose out of the first, the active and transitive form, the Shivaite doctrine of the ' aspects ' arose from the second, the passive form. The infuriated murderous Shiva, Shiva the dancer, Shiva the holy ascetic, Shiva-Lingam the sexual demon, Parvati the cruel mother and Kali the blood-thirsty, Sati the faithful wife, Kanya the virgin and Kotari the naked Maenad—all these are manifestations of a divine individual in ecstasy, absorbed in meditation, possessed and transformed from inside by changing visions.

The lability of the primitive individual is expressed in Shiva and his aspects. The instability of the primitive's soul—as something separable from the individual—is represented by Vishnu and the transmigration of the soul. The two basic types of the psychology of the primitive individual are reflected in this dualism of Indian mythology.

This disconcerting complexity of the ' aspects ' can only be clarified and traced back to a denominator by making them appear still more

complicated for a moment. 'Aspects' are characteristic of Shivaism—however, they exist not only in Shivaism but also in Vaishnavism. In the orthodox Vaishnavite doctrine Shiva is only a function or an aspect of Vishnu or Krishna, who is the creator and lord of the worlds. In Shivaite theology Vishnu plays the same role as a mere 'aspect' of Shiva, an illusory existence. In the Mahabharata Vishnu has three 'avasthas' or aspects: that of Brahma, the active creator of the world, who is connected with the dreaming Vishnu, floating on the water, by the umbilical cord of the lotus; that of Shiva as the destroying force which sprang from the forehead of Vishnu; and that of Vishnu himself in his manifestation as Krishna, the king of the world. They are all mere aspects or 'avasthas' of Vishnu. On the other hand, in the Upanishads it is said of Shiva: 'He is Brahma, he is Indra, he is Vishnu, he is the highest god'. And the Hari-Vansa says: 'There is no difference between Shiva, who exists in the form of Vishnu, and Vishnu, who exists in the form of Shiva'.

In this whole complex there are manifestly two contradictory forces working, as in physics. One is a centripetal or monotheistic tendency which seeks to embrace all the gods within one god, whether this one god happens to be called Vishnu or Shiva or Brahma. This tendency might be Aryo-Brahmanic. The other is a centrifugal, polytheistic, pagan tendency, which disintegrates every single god into a thousand different manifestations in order to adapt them to the animistic primitive needs, where Shiva is only a sort of collective conception and signifies a thousand gods and a thousand goddesses, forest demons and cattle demons, goddesses of the soil, household goddesses, demons of disease and gods of fertility. The two forces, centrifugal and centripetal, act opposite to each other. There is no possibility of doubts as to which of these two tendencies possesses more real vitality. One can hear the cultured and learned Indian, Vivekananda, or Gandhi or any Hindu student in Bombay talk of a one and only god exactly as much as a matter of course as though he were a Christian, a Mohammedan or a Jew. But in the village the old animistic field and jungle demons are still worshipped under Hindu names—the wife of a mill worker in Bombay can not be dissuaded from offering, to the goddess Mahalakshmi or Kali, flowers, fruits, the coins she has saved, and even, if she can manage it, a little black goat, whose blood will dye the altar and whose poor glazed eyes will stare out from the dark little temple of the blood-thirsty goddess—the bazaar merchant, the stockbroker, the mill worker, all will dance ecstatically around the image of Ganesha, the elephant god, on the sea-shore in Bombay—and the respected grandmother still drinks the urine of the sacred cow, which is so efficacious against sins and all ills of old age. It is not the Brahmin, neither Vivekananda or Gandhi, nor yet the enlightened student in the café in Bombay, who has been victorious in this conflict of a thousand years.

III

Essentially, Hindu sculpture—undoubtedly the highest artistic expression of the Hindu genius—has been limited by the polarity of Hindu thought, by the Hindu 'Either—Or': either total renunciation, or total acceptance of the body, its own rulings, its own blessings and curse. There is nothing between these two poles. Hindu sculpture is enormous in the expression of the ascetic, the dreaming meditator, the dancing destroyer—and in the expression of voluptuous sexuality in full bloom. It repeats the antithetic philosophy of life in Bartrihari's classical *Satakas* by Malwa, a book of aphorisms of about the eighth century A.D.: 'Shall we dedicate ourselves to the nitambas (caves) of the sages or to the nitambas of young and beautiful women?' This is the plain antinomy of Indian art also: there is reality, shape, outline, life in the self-negation of sex, in the ecstacy of sex; or in the self-negation and ecstacy of asceticism, of the holy dream, the holy frenzy. What is between them, the average life, touches a higher reality only in its failure—in the experience of life as a failure. The only exception perhaps is the kindly, cunning, benevolently condescendent appearance of Ganesha the Elephant-God, a symbol of shrewdness and success in this life, the only true humorist in the pantheon of Indian art.

Where mysticism stiffened into a profession—a sometimes exceedingly doubtful profession—and into a technique, the individual inspired artist does not really exist. That too is a border region that must be analysed with caution. We know the names of the great classical dramatists and poets of Hinduism; we also know the names of their works. But in the most objective arts, painting and sculpture, which are concerned with the external appearance of men and things, with that which is the most individual, we are in the darkness of an almost complete anonymity of creation (just as in the most individual art, which 'represents' nothing, namely, music.) We know the names of a few classical artists, but we can hardly connect them with definite works of art. There are classical works on aesthetics and philosophy of art, but no classical history of art such as Vasari, in which a chronicle of artists and their works is given. We do not know the artists of Elephanta, Ajanta and Ellora, not even the creators of hundreds and thousands of the most remarkable miniatures, the origin of which reaches almost into our times. We know them as little as the masters of the Byzantine mosaics. Where the artist does not appear as a mystic and the conception of the individual inspiration of the artist is so uncertain and unofficial, the chief emphasis will always lie in the anonymous popular art. One regards and collects Indian art like ancient Mexican and Peruvian art, almost like the art of Central African tribes. The present author himself, at the annual fair at the temple of Mahalakshmi in Bombay, before the war, bought a carved wooden statuette of Rama on horseback which is scarcely less impressive than the Colleoni. It was made in some workshop in

Southern India, perhaps by the very man who sold it for about eight shillings. In Benares or Nasik, the holy cities, one can—or one could, before the war—buy for a few rupees, on the days of processions, small bronzes of goddesses or gods, which were as marvellous as any archaic Grecian or Etruscan small sculpture. They were definitely not copies of old originals, but products of a thousand-year-old unchanged tradition. If we place the works of modern Indian artists beside them the grotesqueness of the situation is revealed. Almost no modern Indian art, created by individual artists, exists between the two extremes of a rather haphazard and unfruitful imitation of Picasso, Matisse and Derain or Maillol and a still more unfruitful, thrashed-out imitation and modernization of the style of Ajanta. The author would not like to offend the two or three really important Indian painters by this assertion. The case is not an isolated one and it is not restricted to India. There are two or three good modern Spanish or Italian painters, but no great national modern Italian or Spanish painting. Inspiration in painting in the two European nations which perhaps produced the greatest painting of the past has simply dried up. To be sure, the reasons for this are quite different in these cases from those that apply to India ; they lie in the general historical and political decline of these countries. In India it is the severance of the mystical inspired element of life from the individual artist. That applies also to modern literature, both poetry and prose. This statement too is not affected by a few exceedingly prominent modern poets and other writers. All of them—from Rabindranath Tagore and Sarojini Naidu down to the youngest generation—are quite essentially influenced by occidental poetry and prose, also in their fundamental spiritual attitude to their own art.

It could be expressed by means of a brief definition : their eternity and infinity lie somewhere outside the visible world, outside the living individual ; they have never combined with each other. They are a doctrinaire experience, not what we occidentals call ' a living experience '. They are so abstract that it almost seems to us as though the Indian ' eternity ' were only the negation of time. There is an absence of all perspectives from reality into eternity and infinity—in feeling and perception and therefore also in art. Indian philosophy—or rather a group of the Indian classical religious philosophers—was the first to represent the unity of god and the world, the omnipresence of the divinity in Nature. But this divinity *is* not Nature. It is rather her opposite like being and illusion, and therefore Indian pantheism always remained only a doctrine. What we in the West call art, namely, the unity of the mystical, the mythical and the physically-concrete, a mutual penetration and animation, has little to do with Indian art. In India that place is occupied by the doctrine of rebirth, a curious abstract mixture of imaginary dimensions of time and space, which form no synthesis but only this remarkable Indian juxtaposition, superposition and yet not unification. Indian art presents the separation of the divine from the visible world, not

their interpenetration—even when, in its sacred writings, it sings of the immanence of God in this world, and particularly then. All that lies beyond Now and Here, all imaginary spaces and times are filled, in India, by mythology and abstract theology. The omnipresence of God in Nature, like the inexhaustible diversity of the individual, the 'Individuum Ineffabile', has only found the most primitive expression in Indian art: the many-headed God. In India he occupies exactly the morphological position of a portrait by Rembrandt or a landscape by Cézanne; only, he is abstract allegory: separation of the elements which constitute art, not their productive fusion.

In this time without perspective, in this space without eternity nothing changes, nothing develops. Even historical time requires those imaginary dimensions in order to achieve movement. Real historical events stand forth so strangely remote and unrelated in this unhistorical land, and it is not without anxiety that we watch the development of a new political structure which probably will achieve nothing other than a new stratum of hyper-modern formations to be laid without relationship over the old fossilized strata.

TWO POEMS

J. A. CHAPMAN

HIMALAYAN SHEPHERDS

'*Venit et upilio, tardi venere subulci*' . . .
and still they come, among these hills, to me;
rough hands, and bearded faces, and with eyes
that never once have looked upon a sea; . . .

either the sea, now stormy, now in sleep;
nor any deep whose salt tides keep,
uninterruptedly, 'gainst tomb-like cliffs,
beating our souls that ever mourn and weep.

JASMINE AND GOLD

Blossom of jasmine and a plate of gold . . ,
the transitory, the enduring: from of old
are threads woven for Young Love's canopy;
and then a shroud against the too dull mould.

Note.—An Indian was brought jasmine on a gold plate. This quatrain is a paraphrase of his comment. In India they are apt to talk poetry in conversation: even the coolies sometimes do.

WHO IS 'SATAN' AND WHERE IS 'HELL'?

ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

'He that doeth sin is of the Devil' (I John 3 : 8).

THAT in this day and age, when 'for most people religion has become an archaic and impossible refuge',[1] men no longer take either God or Satan seriously, arises from the fact that they have come to think of both alike only objectively, only as persons external to themselves and for whose existence no adequate proof can be found. The same, of course, applies to the notions of their respective realms, heaven and hell, thought of as times and places neither now nor here.

We have, in fact, ourselves postponed the 'kingdom of heaven on earth' by thinking of it as a material Utopia to be realized, we fondly hope, by means of one or more five-year plans, overlooking the fact that the concept of an endless progress is that of a pursuit 'in which thou must sweat eternally',[2]—a phrase suggestive less of heaven than of hell. What this really means is that we have chosen to substitute a present hell for a future heaven we shall never know.

The doctrine to be faced, however, is that 'the kingdom of heaven is within you', here and now, and that, as Jacob Boehme, amongst others, so often said, 'heaven and hell are everywhere, being universally extended. . . . Thou art accordingly in heaven or hell. . . . The soul hath heaven or hell within itself',[3] and cannot be said to 'go to' either when the body dies. Here, perhaps, the solution of the problem of Satan may be sought.

It has been recognized that the notion of a Satanic 'person', the chief of many 'fallen Angels', presents some difficulties: even in religion, that of a Manichean 'dualism' emerges; at the same time, if it be maintained that anything whatever is not God, God's infinity is thereby circumscribed and limited. Is 'he', Satan, then a person, or merely a 'personification', i.e., postulated personality?[4] Who is

[1] Margaret Marshall, in *The Nation*, February 2, 1946.

[2] Jacob Boehme, *De incarnatione Verbi*, 2.5.18.

[3] *Idem*, *Dialogues*, 'The Supersensual Life', and 'Of Heaven and Hell' and 'A Discourse . . .'

[4] 'Person cannot be affirmed . . . of living things . . . bereft of intellect and reason . . . but we say there is a person of a man, of God, of an Angel' (Boethius, *Contra Eutychen*, 2). On this basis, Satan, who remains an Angel even in Hell, can be called a Person, or indeed, Persons, since his name is 'Legion: for we are many'; but as a fallen being, 'out of his right mind' in reality a Person only potentially. Much the same could be said of the soul, viz., that there is a Person of the soul, but hardly that the soul, as it is in itself, is a Person. Satan and the soul, both alike invisible, are only 'known', or rather 'inferred', from behaviour, which is just what 'personality' implies: 'personality, that is the hypothetical unity that one postulates to account for the doings of people' (H. S. Sullivan, 'Introducton to the study of Interpersonal Relations', *Psychiatry*, 1, 1938).

' he ', and where ? Is he a serpent or a dragon, or has he horns and a poisonous tail ? Can he be redeemed and regenerated, as Origen and the Muslims have believed ? All these problems hang together.

However the ultimate truth of ' dualism ' may be repudiated, a kind of dualism is logically unavoidable for all practical purposes, because any world in time and space, or that could be described in words or by mathematical symbols, must be one of contraries, both quantitative and qualitative, for example, long and short, good and evil ; and even if it could be otherwise, a world without these opposites would be one from which all possibility of choice, and of procedure from potentiality to act, would be excluded, not a world that could be inhabited by human beings such as we. For anyone who holds that ' God made the world ', the question, Why did He permit the existence in it of any evil, or that of the Evil One in whom all evil is personified, is altogether meaningless ; one might as well enquire why He did not make a world without dimensions or one without temporal succession.

Our whole metaphysical tradition, Christian and other, maintains that ' there are two in us ',[5] this man and the Man in this man ; and that this is so is still a part and parcel of our spoken language in which, for example, the expression ' self-control ' implies that there is one that controls and another subject to control, for we know that ' nothing acts upon itself ',[6] though we forget it when we talk about ' self-government '.[7] Of these two ' selves ', outer and inner man, psycho-physical ' personality ' and very Person, the human composite of body, soul, and spirit is built up. Of these two, on the one hand body-and-soul (or-mind), and on the other, spirit, one is mutable and mortal, the other constant and immortal ; one ' becomes ', the other ' is ', and the existence of the one that is not, but becomes, is precisely a ' personification ' or ' postulation ', since we cannot say of anything that never remains the same that ' it *is* '. And however necessary it may be to say ' I ' and ' mine ' for the practical purposes of everyday life, our Ego in fact is nothing but a name for what is really only a sequence of observed behaviours.[8]

[5] Plato, *Republic* 439 D, E, 604 B ; Philo, *Det.* 2 ; St. Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.* II, II, 26.4 ; St. Paul, II *Cor.* 4 : 16 ; and in general, as the doctrine is briefly stated by Goethe : ' Zwei Seelen wohnen ach, in meiner Brust, die eine will sich von der andern trennen ' (*Faust*, I, 759). Similarly in the Vedanta, Buddhism, Islam, and in China.

[6] *Nil agit in seipsum :* axiomatic in Platonic, Christian and Indian philosophy : ' the same thing can never do or suffer opposites in the same respect or in relation to the same thing at the same time ', Plato, *Republic*, 436 B ; ' strictly speaking, no one imposes a law upon his own actions ', St. Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.* 1.93.5 ; ' because of the antinomy involved in the notion of acting upon oneself (*svātmani ca kriyāvirodhāt*), śankara on *BG* 2.17.

[7] ' Art thou free of self ? then art thou ' Self-governed ' (*selbes gewaltic* = Skr. *svarāt*), Meister Eckhart (Pfeiffer) p. 598.

[8] ' How can that which is never in the same state " be " anything ? ' (Plato, *Cratylus*, 439 E : *Theatetus*, 152 D ; *Symposium*, 207 D, etc.) ' " Ego " has no real meaning, because it is perceived only for an instant ', i.e., does not last for even so long as two consecutive moments (*naivāham-arthah ksanikatva-darsanāt*, *Vivekacudamani*, 293).

Body, soul, and spirit: can one or other of these be equated with the Devil? Not the body, certainly, for the body in itself is neither good nor evil, but only an instrument or means to good or evil. Nor the Spirit—intellect, synteresis, conscience, Agathos Daimon—for this is, by hypothesis, man's best and most divine part, in itself incapable of error, and our only means of participation in the life and the perfection that is God himself. There remains only the 'soul'; that soul which all must 'hate' who would be Christ's disciples and which, as St. Paul reminds us, the Word of God like a two-edged sword 'severs from the spirit'; a soul which St. Paul must have 'lost' to be able to say truly that 'I live, yet not *I*, but Christ in me', announcing, like Manṣūr, his own theosis.

Of the two in us, one the 'spark' of Intellect or Spirit, and the other, Feeling or Mentality, subject to persuasion, it is obvious that the latter is the 'tempter', or more truly 'temptress'. There is in each of us, in this man and that woman alike an *anima* and *animus*, relatively feminine and masculine;[9] and, as Adam rightly said, 'the woman gave, and I did eat'; also, be it noted, the 'serpent', by whom the woman herself was first beguiled, wears, in art, a woman's face. But to avoid all possibility of misunderstanding here, it must be emphasized that all this has nothing whatever to do with a supposed inferiority of women or superiority of men: in this functional and psychological sense any given woman may be 'manly' (heroic) or any given man 'effeminate' (cowardly).[10]

One knows, of course, that 'soul', like 'self', is an ambiguous term, and that, in some contexts, it may denote the Spirit or 'Soul *of* the soul', or 'Self *of* the self', both of which are expressions in common use. But we are speaking here of the mutable 'soul' as distinguished from the 'spirit', and should not overlook to what extent this *nefesh*, the *anima* after which the human and other 'animals' are so called, is constantly disparaged in the Bible,[11] as is the corresponding *nafs* in Islam. This soul is the self to be 'denied' (the Greek original meaning 'utterly reject', with ontological rather than a merely ethical application), the soul that must be 'lost' if 'it' is to be saved; and which, as Meister Eckhart and the Ṣūfīs so often say, must 'put itself to death', or, as the Hindus and Buddhists say, must be 'conquered' or 'tamed', for 'that is not my Self'.

[9] It is unfortunate that, in modern psychology, an originally lucid terminology and distinction has been confused by an equation of the 'soul-image' with 'the *anima* in man, the *animus* in woman'. The terms are even more misused by Father D'Arcy in his *Mind and Heart of Love*, ch. 7. Traditionally, *anima* and *animus* are the 'soul' and the 'spirit' equally in any man or any woman; so William of Thierry (cf. note 22 below) speaks of *animus vel spiritus*. This usage goes back to Cicero, e.g., *Tusc.* I. 22.52, Neque nos corpora sumus. Cum igitur *nosce te* dicit, hoc dicit, *nosce animum tuum*, and V. 13.38. humanus animus decerptus est ex mente divina; and Accidius (*trag.* 296), sapimus animo, fruimur anima; sine animo, anima est debilis.

[10] In all traditions, not excepting the Buddhist, this man and this woman are both equally capable of 'fighting the good fight'.

This soul, subject to persuasion, and distracted by its likes and dislikes, this 'mind' that we mean when we speak of having been 'minded to do this or that' is 'that which thou callest "I" or "myself"', and which Jacob Boehme thus distinguishes from the I that *is*, when he says, with reference to his own illuminations, that 'not I, the I that I am, knows these things, but God in me'. We cannot treat the doctrine of the Ego at length, but will only say that, as for Meister Eckhart and the Ṣūfis, 'Ego, the word I, is proper to none but God in his sameness', and that 'I' can only rightly be attributed to Him and to the one who, being 'joined unto the Lord, is one spirit'.

That the soul herself, our 'I' or 'self' itself, should be the Devil—whom we call the 'enemy', 'adversary', 'tempter', 'dragon',—never by a personal name[12]—may seem startling, but it is very far from being a novel proposition. As we go on, it will be found that an equation of the soul with Satan has often been enunciated, and that it provides us with an almost perfect solution of all the problems that the latter's 'personality' poses. Both are 'real' enough for all pragmatic purposes here, in the active life where 'evil' must be contended with, and the dualism of the contraries cannot be evaded; but they are no more 'principles', no more really real, than the darkness that is nothing but the privation of light.

No one will deny that the battleground on which the psychomachy must be fought out to a finish is within you, or that, where Christ fights, there also must his enemy, the Antichrist be found. Neither will anyone, 'superstitition' apart, be likely to pretend that the Temptations of St. Anthony, as depicted in art, can be regarded otherwise

[11] Cf. D. B. Macdonald, *Hebrew Philosophical Genius* (p. 139), 'the lower, physical nature, the appetites, the psyche of St. Paul . . . "self", but always with that lower meaning behind it'; Grimm, *Greek-English Lexikon of the New Testament*, s.v. ψυχικόσ ('governed by the sensuous nature subject to appetite and passion'); 'anima . . . cujus vel pulchritudo virtus, vel deformitas vitium est . . . mutabilis est' (St. Augustine, *De gen. ad litt.* 7.6.9, and *Ep.* 166.2.3).

On the other hand, the 'Soul' or 'Self' as printed with the capital is Jung's 'Self . . . around which it [the Ego] revolves, very much as the earth rotates about the sun . . . [its] superordinated subject' (*Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, p. 268); not *a* being, but the inconnumerable and indefinable 'Being of all beings'.

We are never told that the mutable soul is immortal in the same timeless way that God is immortal, but only that it is immortal 'in a certain way of its own' (*secundum quemdam modum suum*, St. Augustine, *Ep.* 166.2.3). If we ask, *Quomodo?*, seeing that the soul is in time, the answer must be, 'in one way only, viz., by continuing to become; since thus it can always leave behind it a new and other nature to take the place of the old' (Plato, *Symposium*, 207 D). It is only God, who is the Soul of the soul, that we can speak of as immortal absolutely (I Tim. 6 : 16). It is incorrect to call the soul 'immortal' indiscriminately, just as it is incorrect to call any man a Genius; man has an immortal Soul, as he has a Genius, but the soul can only be immortalized by returning to its source, that is to say, by dying to itself and living to its Self; just as a man becomes a Genius only when he is no longer 'himself'.

[12] Even the Hebrew Sāṭān, 'opponent', is not a personal name.

than as 'projections' of interior tensions. In the same way that Picasso's 'Guernica' is the mirror of Europe's disintegrated soul, 'the hell of modern existence', the Devil's horns and sting are an image of the most evil beast in man himself. Often enough it has been said by the 'Never-enough honoured Auncients', as well as by modern authors, that 'man is his own worst enemy'. On the other hand, the best gift for which a man might pray is to be 'at peace with himself';[13] and, indeed, for so long as he is not at peace with Himself,[14] he can hardly be at peace with anybody else, but will 'project' his own disorders, making of 'the enemy'—for example, Germany, or Russia, or the Jews—his 'devil'. 'From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even from your lusts (pleasure, or desires, Skr. *kāmāḥ*) that contend in your members?' (James 4 : 1).

As Jung so penetratingly observes: 'When the fate of Europe carried it into a four years war of stupendous horror—a war that no one wanted—hardly anyone asked who had caused the war and its continuation'[15] The answer would have been unwelcome: it was 'I'—your 'I' and mine. For, in the words of another modern psychologist, E. E. Hadley, 'the tragedy of this delusion of individuality is that it leads to isolation, fear, paranoid suspicion, and wholly unnecessary hatreds'.[16]

All this has always been familiar to the theologians, in whose writings Satan is so often referred to simply as 'the enemy'. For example, William Law: 'You are under the power of no other enemy, are held in no other captivity, and want no other deliverance but from the power of your own earthly self. This is the one murderer of the divine life within you. It is your own Cain that murders your own Abel',[17] and 'self is the root, the tree, and the branches of all the evils of our fallen state . . . Satan, or which is the same thing, self-exaltation. . . . This is that full-born natural self that must be pulled out of the heart and *totally denied*, or there can be no disciple of Christ'. If, indeed, 'the kingdom of heaven is within you', then also the 'war in heaven' will be there, until Satan has been overcome, that is, until the Man in this man is 'master of himself', *selbes gewaltic*, ἐγχρατὴς ἑαυτοῦ.

[13] *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*, 320 where the expression εὔνουν εἶναι σεαυτῷ = μετανοεῖν ('repentance', i.e., 'coming to be in one's right mind'), the opposite of παρανοεῖν.

[14] The Self we mean when we tell a man who is misbehaving to 'Be yourself' (ἐν σαυτῷ γενοῦ, Sophocles, *Philoctetes* 950),—for 'all is intolerable when any man forsakes his proper Self, to do what fits him not' (*Ibid.* 902, 903).

[15] C. G. Jung, *The Integration of Personality*, p. 274.

[16] E. E. Hadley, in *Psychiatry*, 5 (1942) 133; citing also H. S. Sullivan, *op. cit.*, pp. 121–34: 'emphasized individuality of each of us, "myself". Here we have the very mother of illusions, the ever pregnant source of preconceptions that invalidate almost all our efforts to understand other people'.

[17] William Law, *The Spirit of Love*, and *An Address to the Clergy*, cited in Stephen Hobhouse, *William Law*, pp. 156, 219, 220.

For the *Theologia Germanica* (chs. 3, 22, 49), it was the Devil's 'I, Me, and Mine' that were the cause of his fall. . . . For the self, the I, the me and the like, all belong to the Evil Spirit, and therefore it is that he is an Evil Spirit. Behold one or two words can utter all that has been said by these many words: 'Be simply and wholly bereft of self'. For 'there is nothing else in hell, but self-will; and if there were no self-will, there would be no devil and no hell'. So, too, Jacob Boehme: 'this vile self-hood possesses the world and wordly things; and dwells also in itself, which is dwelling in hell'; and Angelus Silesius:

> 'Nichts anders stürzet dich in Höllenschlund hinein
> Als dass verhasste Wort (merk's wohl!): das Mein und Dein'.[18]

Hence the resolve, expressed in a Shaker hymn:

> 'But now from my forehead I'll quickly erase
> The stamp of the Devil's great "I"'.[19]

Citations of this kind could be indefinitely multiplied, all to the effect that of all evil beasts, 'the most evil beast we carry in our bosom',[20] 'our most godless and despicable part' and 'multifarious beast', which our 'Inner Man', like a lion-tamer, must keep under his control or else will have to follow where it leads.[21]

Even more explicit sayings can be cited from Sūfī sources, where the soul (*nafs*) is distinguished from the intellect or spirit ('*aql*, *rūh*) as the Psyche is distinguished from the Pneuma by Philo and in the New Testament, and as *anima* from *animus* by William of Thierry.[22] For the encyclopaedic *Kashfu'l Mahjūb*, the soul is the 'tempter', and the type of hell in this world.[23] Al-Ghazālī, perhaps the greatest of the Muslim theologians, calls the soul 'the greatest of your enemies'; and more than that could hardly be said of Satan himself. Abū Sā'īd asks: 'What is evil, and what is the worst evil?' and answers, 'Evil is "thou", and the worst evil "thou" if thou knowest it not'; he, therefore, called himself a 'Nobody', refusing, like the Buddha, to identify himself with any nameable 'personality'.[24] Jalālu'd Dīn Rūmī, in his *Mathnawī*, repeats that man's greatest enemy is himself: 'This soul', he says, 'is hell', and he bids us 'slay the

[18] Angelus Silesius, *Der Cherubinische Wandersmann*, 5.238.

[19] E. D. Andrews, *The Gift to be Simple*, p. 18; cf. p. 79, 'That great big I, I'll mortify'.

[20] Boehme, *De inc. Verbi*, 1.12.20.

[21] Plato, *Republic*, 588 C ff. where the whole soul is compared to such a composite animal as the Chimaera, Scylla, or Cerberus. In some respects the Sphinx might have been an even better comparison. In any case, the human, leonine, and ophidian parts of these creatures correspond to the three parts of the soul, in which 'the human in us, or rather our divine part' should prevail; of which Hercules leading Cerberus would be a good illustration.

[22] William of Thierry, *Epistle to the Brethren of Mont Dieu*, §§ 50, 51.

[23] *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, tr. R. A. Nicholson (Gibb Memorial Series XVII) p. 199; cf. p. 9 'the greatest of all veils between God and man'.

[24] For Abū Sā'īd see R. A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, p. 53.

soul '. ' The soul and Shaitān are both one being, but take two forms ; essentially one from the first, he became the enemy and envier of Adam ' ; and, in the same way, ' the Angel (Spirit) and the Intellect, Adam's helpers, are of one origin but assume two forms '. The quarrel of the sensitive soul with the Intellect is like that of a woman with the master of the house. The Ego holds its head high : ' decapitation means, to slay the soul and quench its fire in the Holy War ' (*jihad*) ; and well for him who wins this battle, for ' whoever is at war with himself for God's sake, . . . his light opposing his darkness, the sun of his spirit shall never set '.[25]

> ' Tis the fight which Christ,
> With his internal Love and Light,
> Maintains within man's nature, to dispel
> God's Anger, Satan, Sin, and Death, and Hell ;
> The human Self, or Serpent, to devour,
> And raise an Angel from it by His Pow'r '.
> (John Byrom)

' Spark of the soul . . . image of God, that there is ever in all wise at war with all that is not godly . . . and is called the Synderesis '[26] (Meister Eckhart, Pfeiffer p. 113). ' We know that the Law is of the Spirit . . . but I see another law in my members, warring against the Law of the Intellect, and bringing me into captivity. . . . With the Intellect I myself serve the Law of God ; but with the flesh the law of sin. . . . Submit yourselves therefore to God : resist the Devil '.[27] And similarly in other Scriptures, notably the Bhagavad Gitā (6.5, 6) : ' Lift up the self by the Self, let not self sit back. For, verily, the Self is both the friend and the foe of the self ; the friend of one whose self has been conquered by the Self, but to one whose self hath not (been overcome), the Self at war, forsooth, acts as an enemy ' ; and the Buddhist *Dhammapada* (103, 160, 380), where ' the Self is the Lord of the self ' and one should ' by the Self incite the self, and by the Self gentle self ' (as a horse is ' broken in ' by a skilled trainer), and ' one who has conquered self is the best of all champions '. (Cf. Philostratus, *Vit. Ap.*, 1-13 : ' Just as we break in skittish and unruly horses by stroking and patting them ').

At the same time, it must not be forgotten that the Psychomachy is also a ' battle of love ', and that Christ—to whom ' ye should be married . . . that we should bring fruit unto God ' (Rom. 7 : 3)—

[25] R. A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalālu'd Dīn Rūmī* (Gibb Memorial Series) 4.2, 4.4, 4.6, and *do.*, Text, 4.1, 4.3, 4.5. Citations are from Rūmī 1.2617, 2.2525, 3.374, 2738, 3193, 4053 (*nafs va shaitān har dū ek in būd'and*) ; cf. 2.2272 f., 5.2919, 2.39. The fundamental kinship of Satan and the Ego is apparent in their common claim to independent being ; and ' association ' (of others with the God who only *is*) amounts, from the Islamic point of view, to polytheism (*ibid*, 4.2675.7).

[26] On the meaning of the ' Synteresis ', etymologically an equivalent of Skr. *saṁ-tāraka*, ' one who helps to cross over ', see O. Renz, *Die Synteresis nach dem Hl. Thomas von Aquin* (Münster i.W., 1911).

[27] *Romans* 7 : 14-23 ; James 4 : 7.

already loved the unregenerate soul 'in all her baseness and foulness',[28] or that it is of her that Donne says: 'Nor ever chaste, except *Thou* ravish me'. It was for nothing but 'to go and fetch his Lady, whom his Father had eternally given him to wife, and to restore her to her former high estate that the Son proceeded out of the Most High' (Meister Eckhart).[29] The Diety's lance or thunderbolt is, at the same time, his yard, with which he pierces his mortal Bride. The story of the thunder-smitten Semele reminds us that the Theotokos, in the last analysis Psyche, has ever been of Lunar, never herself of solar stock; and all this is the sum and substance of every 'solar myth', the theme of the *Liebesgeschichte Himmels* and of the *Drachenkämpfe*.

'Heaven and earth: let them be wed again'.[30] Their marriage, consummated in the heart, is the *Hieros Gamos*, *Daivam Mithunam*;[31] and those in whom it has been perfected are no longer anyone, but as He is 'who never became anyone'.[32] Plotinus' words: 'Love is of the very nature of the Psyche, and hence the constant yoking of Eros with the Psyches in the pictures and the myths'[33] might as well have been said of half the world's fairy-tales, and especially of the Indian 'pictures and myths' of Śrī Krishna and the Milkmaids, of which the Indian commentators rightly deny the historicity, asserting that all these are things that come to pass in all men's experience. Such, indeed, are 'the *erōtika* (Skr. *śṛṅgāra*) into which, it seems that you, O Socrates, should be initiated', as Diotima says, and which in fact he so deeply respected.[34]

But, this is not only a matter of Grace; the soul's salvation depends also on her submission, her willing surrender; it is prevented for so long as she resists. It is her pride (*māna*, *abhimāna*; οἴημα, οἴησις; self-opinion, overweening), the Satanic conviction of her own independence (*asmi-māna*, *ahaṁkāra*, cogito ergo sum), her evil rather than herself, that must be killed; this pride she calls her 'self-respect', and would 'rather die' than be divested of it. But the death that she at last, despite herself, desires, is no destruction but a transformation. Marriage is an initiatory death and integration (*nirvāṇa*, *saṁskāra*, τέλος).[35] 'Der Drache und die Jungfrau sind natürlich identisch';[36] the 'Fier Baiser' transforms the dragon; the mermaid loses her ophidian tail; the girl is no more when the woman has been 'made'; from the nymph the winged soul

[28] St. Bonaventura, *Dominica prima post octavum epiphaniae*, 2.2. For the whole theme see, also, my 'On the Loathly Bride', *Speculum*, 20 (1945), pp. 391-404.

[29] Pfeiffer p. 288.

[30] *Rigveda* 10.24.5.

[31] *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 10.5.2.12.

[32] *Kaṭha Up.* 2.18.

[33] Plotinus, *Enneads* 6.9.9.

[34] Plato, *Symposium* 210A.

[35] *Nirvāṇa*, *Jātaka* 1.60; *saṁskāra*, Manu 2.67; τέλος, Liddell and Scott, *s.v.*, VI. 2.

emerges.[37] And so ' through Thee an Iblis may become again one of the Cherubim '.[38]

And what follows when the lower and the higher forms of the soul have been united ? This has nowhere been better described than in the *Aitareya Āranyaka* (2.2.7) : ' This Self gives itself to that self, and that self to this Self ; they become one another ; with the one form he (in whom this marriage has been consummated) is unified with yonder world, and with the other united to this world ' ; the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upanishad* (4.3.23) : ' Embraced by the Prescient-Self, he knows neither a within nor a without. Verily, that is his form in which his desire is obtained, in which the Self is his desire, and in which no more desires or grieves '. ' Amor ipse non quiescit, nisi in amato, quod fit, cum obtinet ipsum possessione plenaria ' ;[39] ' Jam perfectam: animam . . . gloriosam sibi sponsam Pater conglutinat '.[40] Indeed :

> ' Dafern der Teufel könnt aus seiner Seinheit gehn,
> So sähest du ihn stracks in Gottes Throne stehn '.[41]

So, then, the Agathos and Kakos Daimons, Fair and Foul selves, Christ and Antichrist, both inhabit us, and their opposition is within us. Heaven and Hell are the divided images of Love and Wrath *in divinis*, where the Light and the Darkness are undivided, and the Lamb and the Lion lie down together. In the beginning, as all traditions testify, heaven and earth were one and together ; essence and nature are one in God, and it remains for every man to put them together again within himself.

All these are our answers. Satan is not a real and single Person, but a severally postulated personality, ' Legion '. Each of these personalities is capable of redemption (apokatastiasis), and can, if it will, become again what it was before it ' fell '—Lucifer, Phosphorus, Hēlēl, Scintilla, the Morning Star, a Ray of the Supernal Sun ; because the Spark, however it may seem to be smothered, is an Asbestos that cannot be extinguished, even in hell. But, in the sense that a redemption of all beings cannot be thought of as taking place at any one time, and inasmuch as there will be devilish souls in need of redemption throughout all time, Satan must be thought of as being damned for ever, meaning by ' damned ', self-excluded from the vision of God and the knowledge of Truth.

The problem with which we started has been largely solved, but it still remains to accomplish the harder tasks of an actual ' self-naughting ' and consequent ' Self-realization ' to which the answers point,

[36] E. Siecke, *Drachenkämpfe*, p. 14.

[37] For the Fier Baiser see the references in my ' On the Loathly Bride ', (*Loc. cit.*). For the marriage, Meister Eckhart (Pfeiffer, p. 407) and Omikron, *Letters from Paulos* (New York, 1920), *passim*.

[38] Rūmi, *op. cit.*, 4.3496.

[39] Jean de Castel, *De adhaerendo Deo*, c. 12.

[40] St. Bernard, *De grad. humilitatis*, 7.21.

[41] Angelus Silesius, *op. cit.*, 1.143. Cf. *Theologia Germanica*, ch. xvi : ' If the evil Spirit himself could come into true obedience, he would become an angel [of light] again, and all his sin and wickedness would be blotted out '.

and for which theology is only a partial preparation. Satan and the Ego are not really entities, but concepts postulated and valid only for present, provisional, and practical purposes ; both are composite photographs, as it were of X_1, X_2, X_3. It has often been said that the Devil's most ingenious device is to persuade us that his existence is a mere ' superstition In fact, however, nothing can be more dangerous than to deny his existence, which is as real, although no more so than our own ; we dare not deny Satan until we have denied ourselves, as everyone must who would follow Him who said and did nothing ' of himself ' ' What is Love ? the sea of non-existence ' ;[42] and ' whoever enters there, saying " It is I," I (God), smite him in the face ' ;[43] ' What is Love ? thou shalt know when *thou* becomest *Me* ' [44]

[42] Rūmī, *op. cit.*, 3.4723.
[43] Shams-i-Tabrīz, Ode 28 in R. A. Nicholson, *Diwāni Shamsi Tabrīz*, p. 115. ' None has knowledge of each who enters that he is So-and-so or So-and-so ', *Ibid.*, p 61.
[44] Rūmī, *op. cit.*, 2, Introduction.

SELECTED NOTICES

Gandhi. By Ela Sen. (Valiant Publications, 8s. 6d.).
In the Path of Mahatma Gandhi. By George Catlin. (MacDonald, 15s.).

In the fullest sense of the term, a biography of Gandhi will never be written. It is true that in the past, especially during the decade prior to his assassination, many books, ranging from his South African days to his belief in non-violence, appeared ; doubtless many more will appear and already the advance lists of a number of different publishers give promises to this effect. Yet in each case at the best all that can be expected is either a memoir interspersed with personal recollections of Bapu, or an interpretive study of the beloved Mahatma. The reason for this, and what at first sight appears such a dogmatic assertion, is because Gandhi wrote his own explanation so lucidly in his autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, that it stands in no need of further commentary : instead all that can be done by later historians is to relate it more fully to his times and assess its influence, an influence which is still growing, hence suggesting that the final task is better fitted to a historian of the next century than the present one. But this is not said to discredit the two authors under review : it is only said to show their limitation which is one of time, not talent.

For instance, Ela Sen's book only reaches as far as September, 1944, whereas George Catlin's book is more in the nature of a personal spiritual journey which found its end and be-all in the teachings of this great sage. His book is ' a quest to find an answer to something which concerns all of us : by what rule should a man in these years best live his life ? It is a piece of autobiography, a travel diary, a record of this quest in India '. On the other hand, Sen's objective is less ambitious, but none the less important for that : it is to take stock of Gandhi's revolutionary activities—always it must be remembered singularly gradual, but determined activities—whilst presenting ' the facts for the judgment of the reader '. However this does not result, as might be implied, in a piece of non-committal work ; rather in this case it provokes criticisms, ' offered in all humility as an individual opinion '. And criticism, as Gandhi would have been the first to admit, can be the finest corrective for

those who wield power : for it brings home the lesson that the power with which those who rule are invested is a trust—a temporal trust. They exist to defend their brethren, to fight for their rights—the chief of which is salvation—and to defend them both physically and spiritually as children of God against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. It is only when this power is abused, when the brethren, the children of God, are regarded as tools for the furtherance of one man's ambition that the whole system of leadership becomes a diabolical mockery. The police-state replaces the free community and Satan takes the place of God.

Now it was this desire to see all men as they really are, as children of God, that made Gandhi begin his campaign on behalf of the Untouchables. When he christened them Harijans (literally, children of God) he was asserting their rights as human beings, entitled just as much as any ruler of one of the Native States to the reward of salvation. As Sen points out, it is of great significance that Gandhi's new name for these Untouchables should have become generally current, even in the ranks of bureaucracy itself. It is a lesson too not without its example in the case of the negro in the United States, for it suggests that if the initiative could be taken there, then there is an equal chance of the colour-bar being no longer seen in terms of black and white : of damnation and salvation. Yet this comment, which is by the bye, does go to endorse, as Catlin brings out, how Gandhi's teachings because they were primarily religious do have a validity which is neither Asian nor Indian, but global. They are rules, which like the rules of Saint Benedict, are as salutary for a community of monks in England today as they were in the eleventh century and equally as salutary for a Chinese Benedictine mission of any time. As Gandhi himself said : ' It is a superstition and an ungodly theory to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority. Many examples can be given in which acts of majorities will be found to have been wrong and those of minorities to have been right. All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to majorities '. And, as Catlin comments, how reminiscent this is of Saint Augustine : ' If among a band of robbers a knowledge of robbery is obligatory, is a pious man to accept the obligation ? ' Or again there are those words of Aurobindo, again so reminiscent of Saint Ignatius in his *Spiritual Exercises :* ' If you feel, whenever you meditate, the quiescence and the flashes of the inner Light and, if the inward urge is growing so strong that the external hold is decreasing and the vital disturbances are losing their force, that is already a great progress '. Moreover, it is the fact that both Sen and Catlin understand this essentially religious basis of life that makes their two books have more than topicality to recommend them : in seeing the *malaise* of contemporary civilization they are, as it were, able to point to Gandhi, saying there lies the way to truth and life because what he was preaching was only an extension, as was the teaching of Saint Augustine and Saint Ignatius, and as is the teaching of Aurobindo, of that which is the Way, the Truth and the Life because being all three in one, it is both one and eternal.

So it is one can see emerging out of Gandhi's writings and life (as mirrored accurately in these two books) that belief that for a community to be able to work its size should be commensurate with its physical and mental stature. In the West it is because communities have been replaced by nation-states that it is becoming increasingly difficult for the individual voice to assert its beliefs. In being swallowed by the whale-state man loses his identitity, but that need not be a reason for despair though it may cause a certain general bemoaning during the period of captivity. There is always an end to the abuse of power and like Jonah if the individual can retain his integrity whilst he lies, as he thinks, so powerlessly in the whale's belly, then there will be a time of deliverance. Integrity can never be disintegrated : by its nature it remains whole and what remains whole is wholesome to the end. What Gandhi wanted to prevent is what had already occurred in the West (which has just been described by analogy), but of which there are already signs now that the collapse seems so imminent, that it may be able to remedy its position through a Western confederation of states. If that should prove to be so, and personal relationships

be restored to their true role in the community, there is a strong likelihood that charity, in a full and complete Pauline sense, will return again to the world: because where the individual in the group counts not merely as a necessary vote on polling day, but as the voice of a child of God, there is the possibility of that inter-change between groups, which is the pre-requisite of love and peace, being once more established.

These reflections caused by these two books could in no way be fairly described as straightforward review comments. There are certain types of books—and such books are these—that call for more than either a review or notice. There are as well certain books, autobiographies in particular, which whilst not being literary, even in the best sense of that term, become classics. One such a book is Gandhi's *Story of My Experiments with Truth.* The reason for this is that as the man becomes more spiritual in his life so what he writes about his life, in ratio to the degree of his spirituality, becomes more accurate because his understanding of what life really *is* becomes clearer. In fact it would be true to say that all great autobiographies are great to the extent that their writers, wittingly or unwittingly, have plumbed the depths of religious experience: and as it would be true to say this, so it would be equally true to say that all those who assay to write books about those who have already written great autobiographies succeed to the extent that they are able to catch something of that divine fire which shines through the original. Both Sen and Catlin have written well of their master and like true disciples his fire burns through their pages.

Illustrations of Indian Art. Chosen by William Cohn. (David Marlowe, 8s. 6d.).
Contemporary Indian Painters. By G. Venkatachalam. (David Marlowe, 15s.).
The Vertical Man. By W. G. Archer. (Allen & Unwin, 15s.).

Since 1910, when the India Society was founded by a small group of scholars, artists and men of letters with the object of promoting in the West a better understanding and appreciation of the culture of India, social and political change and the gradual awakening of national consciousness have sharpened the Indian's own awareness of the great cultural heritage of his country. In the West, too, we have progressed far since 1910: one had only to visit the Exhibition of Art from India and Pakistan at Burlington House recently to realize that. It is in this connection, therefore, that the work of the India Society has been so constructive: holding itself entirely aloof from political controversy, it has done much to bridge the gulf between the art of the Orient and the Occident—a gulf which can only be bridged, not closed up, because the line of cleavage goes much deeper than mere differences in technique: indeed it is the difference between two totally opposed ways of life, and their relations to art.

Illustrations of Indian Art is one small example of the Society's valuable work. Small, because illustrations such as these can, unfortunately, do little more than suggest the beauty of their originals, but valuable because, studied in conjunction with the brief introduction by J. V. S. Wilkinson, they do give some idea of the general trends of the history of Indian art. It is, of course, only in India itself that a really adequate study of the art can be made, for although bronzes and paintings can be transported, temples and the Ajanta caves cannot, and it is in this respect that photography has to supplement the impressions of a visitor to an Exhibition.

Nothing illustrates more forcibly the awakening of national consciousness in India than the growth of a school of painting which rejects Western influences and seeks inspiration from the art of its own past. It is from this point of view that G. Venkatachalam's study of *Contemporary Indian Painters* is mainly interesting to the English reader, for in themselves his pen-portraits of the

artists he has known and conversed with strike one as being somewhat naïve in their enthusiasm and, perhaps, of little value as criticism. Physical and mental attributes, as well as conditions of living, undoubtedly have their influences on the course of an artist's work, but such anecdotage as this seems unnecessarily trivial; indeed, the most adult of Venkatachalam's studies is that of Jamini Roy, an artist whom he admits he has only met of recent years and does not know at all well. Yet the book is valuable in other ways. It is partly so because it presents a comprehensive picture of the contemporary scene in Indian painting, and partly because of its obvious hostility to the Government Schools of Art which existed under British rule, and its ardent championing of those artists who have abandoned all European influences and sought to return to the traditions of the art of their own country. One cannot but sympathise with this attitude: oriental artists who have tried to overcome their own national—or even spiritual—characteristics and to adopt Western modes of thought and expression have, for the most part, lost all originality and even ability, but the fact remains that until very recently the majority of Indians of the intelligentsia were educated at English schools and universities, and trained in an appreciation of European art and letters, which was bound to affect their outlook. For them, after all, it is still a period of transition between semi-illiteracy and full national awareness, and transitional periods are always painful to pass through.

Perhaps the most important contribution that Venkatachalam makes to an understanding of the subject is contained not in the main part of his book, but in an Appendix designed as a defence against the obtuseness of Beverley Nichols. This, surely, is the crux of the whole matter: '. . . its aims and ideals . . are different. It never attempted to portray the "facts of life"; it concerned itself with the "realities" of life. And the realities of life to the Indian are not the world of the senses, but the world of his inner being, the depths of his consciousness' Only when this is understood, can Indian art be understood.

'Indian art, like Indian life, is rooted in the villages, and with the gradual impoverishment of that life followed the inevitable decay and degeneracy of Indian art. Indian civilization was, and still is, to a large extent a rural civilization and not urban and Indian art, therefore, was and still is the art of the people'. This quotation from Venkatachalam brings one directly to the last of the books under review—*The Vertical Man*, 'a Study in Primitive Indian Sculpture', by W. G. Archer.

In the last twenty or thirty years, Indian temple sculpture has been widely studied and illustrated, with all its complex features, in relation to Hinduism and Buddhism, but until this book no real study has been undertaken of the curious and fascinating sculpture of the Indian countryside, based on the primitive fertility rites which represent the life force to the village communities. Archer's book, which deals with two types of this primitive sculpture to be found in Bihar, is interesting not so much for his analysis of that 'will to vital geometry', as he calls it, which inspires the form that the art takes, as for his tracing of the rituals and cults which have produced it. These cults are based on the principle of fertility in buffaloes, and the myths which have inspired them are always bound up in some way with this principle. The cow is a vital factor in Indian life, for as George Catlin says, 'for anyone who has travelled over the vast scorched land of India, where vegetation wilts, where only the cow or the goat live on, licking up the little moisture, it will be clear that the Aryan and even the earlier Indian peoples entered India on the back of the cow, lived by the udders of the cow, and would have died out if it had not been for the cow'.* In these myths, then, it is interesting to find that, although the stories differ quite widely from each other, two factors always remain constant in them—the buffaloes and some form or other of martyrdom. Both these factors throw considerable light not only on the primitive sculpture of Bihar, but also on the whole question of the relation between art and religion, which is, after all, the main question in Indian art.

* *In The Path of Mahatma Gandhi* (*Also reviewed* *See page* 59)

Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought? By Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. (Luzac, 10s. 6d.)
Am I my Brother's Keeper? By Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. (John Day).
Time and Eternity By Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. (Artibus Asiae Publishers, 20 S. frs.).

To think 'with' someone and not merely 'of' someone is the mark of unity in friendship. It implies the operation of a loving intellect, is centred in contemplation, wherein is the birth-place of the intellectual activities of prayer, metaphysics, and all artistic life. It is this quality of thinking with his subject that enables Ananda K. Coomaraswamy to extend his mind over the cultural outlines of the world and to record and relate them to one another with such sympathetic clarity. Of the three books under review, *Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought?* may be most deeply understood as a study in the meaning of art and its relations to metaphysics; *Am I My Brother's Keeper?* as a short comparative study of religious culture in East and West and its co-incidence with Western 'progressive' thought; and *Time and Eternity* as a study based upon the distinction between the 'moment' which is timeless, has not parts, and leads to the mystery of eternity, and the minute which has parts and leads to the 'problem', as seen in the context of Hinduism, Buddhism, in Islam, in Greece, in Christianity, and in Modernism.

The reading of these books tempts the mind to stray down many a path of wonderment. Here is a man with reverent mind, humble enough to seek truth in every corner of the world, one who knows Art to be a movement of the intellect: 'In the traditional view of Art there is no beauty that can be divided from intelligibility; no splendour but the "splendor veritas" . . .' and that is worth dying for. From it emerges the traditional view of the contemplative artist as the servant of truth. . . . The truth received, the truth shown in splendour of form, the form partaking of a quality of traditional thought and feeling; and the contrast, in modern subjective art, (the author prefers to use the word 'personal') in which the artist fears to cultivate the intellect lest it freeze and codify his inspiration. He shows how the word 'inspire' has been 'scabrously abused by modern authors', for are they not inspired 'by' rather than 'through' the very physical materials they work with? And is not the basic distinction one between 'inspiration' and 'excitement'? And the modern emotional error a mistaking of excitement for inspiration? For now that the intellectual life of Europe has become 'academic' (in its modern pejorative and isolationist sense) and modern education 'literate', 'at the best we interpret the classical figures of thought, not in their universality, but as figures of speech invented by individual authors'. We have lost the 'two-fold significance of words', abandoning the spiritual, but retaining their literal, problematical, time-tied meaning.

The reviewer would venture to touch on a problem of universality, not specifically mentioned in these three books. A realist metaphysic postulates the universal, and art, if it is to include the intellect within its inspiration, must proceed by way of metaphysics through the particular to the universal. If art reacts from metaphysics and does not come to an universal, consciously, by way of the inspired intellect, it none the less seeks an universal. It is interesting to consider that this universal may be found in the collective unconscious of man out of which arise figures that possess him . . .

> 'Shall those primeval friends of ours, the unfated,
> ever-unsuing gods, because they are nought for
> the hard-faced steel we have sternly nursed, be repudiated,
> or else within some map be suddenly sought for?
>
> Those overmastering friends' . . .[1]

With this in mind it is an enlightening experience to read C. G. Jung's recently published essay on Wotan[2] and to note how these 'primeval friends' may

[1] *Sonnets of Orpheus.* First Part XXIV. Translated by J. B. Leishman.
[2] *Essays on Contemporary Events* (1947).

possess man and his 'hard-faced steel'. Yet it is agreed that art is the work of the whole man and we have therefore to accept in some form our primeval friends, even as we accept the activity of the intellect in artistic creation.

Now if it can be shown that there is an universal, a constant, at the depths of personality then the problem may be brought to a metaphysical level, even as St. Thomas Aquinas brought his controversy with the Neo-Augustinians on the unity of the soul within his metaphysic. An attempt to show that this may be possible through a study of psychology, and an attempt to relate it to Christian theology, has been made by Fr. Victor White in a paper entitled 'St. Thomas' Conception of Revelation'.[3] 'Even angels', he says, 'could not overrule the ordinary processes of psychology and biology. . . . The important conclusion is inescapable that in St. Thomas' mind, the proximate and immediate cause of supernatural, no less than natural "prophetia", were invariably physical and biological in character;' and this recalls Aristotle's theory of perception when he speaks of 'the movement of the soul through the body' setting up repercussions both in the body and in the soul. From this Fr. White shows that all inspired thinking comes by way of images either from natural or supernatural sources, and the problem of 'prophetia' is not a problem of speech, but of a certain kind of consciousness. If Coomaraswamy had lived he would have been greatly interested in this paper and would doubtless have made his distinction at this point between the literal and spiritual meaning of words, which is in line with Jung's distinction between the 'sign' and the 'symbol'.

Now a study of art and, perhaps most particularly of Hindu art, should help us to establish this distinction more concretely and may bring us nearer to a notion of an universal within the personal unconscious that can be given an image, and which may help us to decide more clearly what we mean when we say that the Mona Lisa 'is older than the rocks among which she sits'. The Gandharva (Eros), understood as a 'winged-maker', is the archetype of human poets, but 'the contest of the Gandharvas', says Coomaraswamy, 'the high Gods of love and music (in Plato's broad sense of the word) is with the unregenerate powers of the soul whose natural inclination is the pursuit of pleasure'. Nevertheless, to quote Fr. White again, 'it is through the subrational that the super-rational is brought into human consciousness'. It is in the battle for the greatest possible consciousness that the artist purifies the unregenerate powers ready to possess him, and the art that he makes will show the conflict, so that he will find his development in an acceptance and a portrayal of these powers . . . these 'primeval friends', in the rational, disciplined, purified form universal, yet particular, of artistic activity. It seems that this is the line of development most likely to show unity of outlook in the cultural life of East and West—thus continuing Ananda Coomaraswamy's noble life's work.

SHORTER NOTICE

The production of a book—particularly of a memorial volume—is always a matter of great importance. *Art and Thought*, edited by K. Bharatha Iyer (Luzac, £3 3s.), was compiled in honour of a distinguished Indian scholar, the late Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, and though it would be presumptuous to criticize the motive, the book as it appears seems both financially unjustified and aesthetically disappointing.

The paper is inferior and thick; the lay-out is sometimes careless; and there are still spelling-mistakes in the text. The two introductory paragraphs of one essay have been reprinted, verbatim, as a footnote, and duly referred to in the article. The translation is occasionally transparent: 'The voluptous mandarins of ancient China were wont to moisten delicately the tips of their fingers to

[3] *Dominican Studies;* January, 1948

caress their jade with more exquisite pleasure '. Any Frenchman—or Englishman, for that matter—would just write '*barbarisme*' in the margin there.

'Art and Thought' is so immense a theme that one is not surprised to find its treatment inadequate or unbalanced. It is certainly difficult here to imagine the editor's aim. What sort of public is he trying to reach? He includes articles of the most general interest ('Do Clothes Make the Man?') alongside essays of the most specialized kind (witness Miss Getty's contribution: 'Two Mesopotamian Seals of the Uruk Period'); one subject, at least, 'Mendeleyev's Mother', is hardly suited to his main theme. Not only the matter, but the manner, too, shows a strange discrimination: for instance, there are six pages about Tibetan book-covers, as much space as is given to the whole relationship of science and religion. There are four pages for Mr. Roerich's essay 'Chhandogya Upanishads', but only three for Monsieur Benoist to fill with his ideas on form and colour in art, and his interpretation of Botticelli's 'Venus'. And so it happens that Monsieur Benoist remarks, almost *en passant*, that all the great schools of colourists were born in lands of mists, whereas all the geometrician-artists, in love with line, have come from countries of strong sunlight and bold shadow. Captain Anthony Ludovici, too, suggests rather casually that great cultures have always been the creation of island or peninsular peoples. That may be so, for there are few nations on earth to whom the proviso would not apply. Yet it seems an extremely doubtful question whether or not native genius should be segregated, even if that were physically possible. Captain Ludovici believes that if sub-normal types were strictly eliminated, the inbreeding would suppress any disparities, and make harmony and balance possible. But surely that very harmony and balance would be lacking? Surely it was the foreign influence which brought the Renaissance of Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and, nearer our own time, the foreign influence which enlivened the eighteenth century and brought the Romantic Movement into invaluable existence? It would be difficult to over-estimate the worth of Classical culture to Racine; or the impact of Italy upon the style of Wren. In every case it was inter-marriage which brought harmony and balance. Captain Ludovici then quotes the late Dr. Coomaraswamy's dictum that 'Secular and personal art can only appeal to cliques', which is bait enough for any reviewer. What of *Paradise Lost*, that happy private hunting-ground for the classically-educated? What, on the other hand, of the sonnets of Keats, eminently personal and universally beloved?

Rather than criticize other incidental remarks, one may profitably say a little more about the most interesting of the forty contributions. Mr. Sherman E. Lee has written an article on 'Los Urthona and Blake's Illustrations to Dante': it is not sectarian, it is not academic, and it holds the reader's attention. Botticelli, though he lived three hundred years nearer Dante, is much further than Blake from understanding the *Inferno*. He makes a merely intellectual approach to a spiritual work: his picture of Hell, as Mr Lee remarks, is like a cross-section of a mine, correct in every detail; the chariot of his Beatrice could obviously move in the normal way; the cap and gown of his Dante are historically accurate. It is Blake who maintains that historical truth is unimportant, and argues: 'I understand that my Costume is incorrect, but in this I plead the authority of the ancients, who often deviated from the Habits to preserve the Manners'. It is the spiritual, or rather, the mystic truth which matters to him: he believes, like Michelangelo, that the figure is in the block, and has only to be hewn out. And so his illustrations are no laboured allegories, but the honest records of visions actually seen. Where Botticelli pictures Brunelleschi devoured by serpents, and conveys intelligible, physical horror, Blake's figure fuses the natural and symbolic: his Brunelleschi is a typical creation, strangely unreal and yet bodily possible. The naïve spectators of the torture are also unearthly; two are actually smiling, but the smiles are not merely incongruous: they are the dispassionate smiles of Greek deities. Blake deserves a book like this all to himself: he really does symbolize art and thought.